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LIFE OF
WILLIAM
OF WYKEHAM



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THE LIFE OF WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM

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THE LIFE OF WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM

BY

AUGUSTA THEODOSIA DRANE

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CONTENTS.



CHAPTER I.

THE SCHOOLBOY AND ARCHITECT.

	PAGE
Birth of Wykeham. His early education. His devotion to our Lady. Old Winchester Cathedral. The Pekis-mass. Wykeham is introduced to the King. He is appointed clerk to the royal works. His skill as an architect. Rebuilding of Windsor Castle. Wykeham is ordained priest. The treaty of Bretigni. Wykeham becomes a Minister of State. He is raised to the see of Winchester. He is made Lord High Chancellor	1

CHAPTER II.

THE CHANCELLOR-BISHOP.

The war in Castile. Fresh hostilities with France. Wykeham's first speech in Parliament. Bad success of the English arms. The ministers are forced to resign. Wykeham in his diocese. He rebuilds his palaces. His devotion to the dead. His character as Bishop. His first visitations. Religious foundation of Winchester. The priory of Selborne. The hospital of St. Cross. State of learning. Wykeham resolves to found a college. Deaths of Queen Philippa and the Black Prince. Intrigue of Lancaster. Charges against Wykeham. His temporalities are seized. Examination of Wickliffe. Popular tumult. Wykeham restored to favour. Death of Edward III. Coronation of Richard II. Insurrection of the Commons. Trial of Wickliffe. Wykeham's position as minister. His second chancellorship	24
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CHAPTER III.

OUR LADY'S COLLEGES.

Wykeham's Grammar-school. Commencement of New College, Oxford. Architecture of the college. Its statutes. Win- chester College. Its design and architecture. Rule of the scholars. Rebuilding of Winchester Cathedral. Wyke- ham's liberality. His household expenditure. His last will. His death. He is buried in his own chantry	PAGE, 71
APPENDIX	116

THE LIFE


OF

WILLIAM OF WYKEHAM.



CHAPTER I.

THE SCHOOLBOY AND ARCHITECT.



THERE are probably few localities in England round which still lingers so much of Catholic association, or which—externally at least—preserve so many memorials of the ages of faith, as the city of Winchester. Of all our cathedral towns it may indeed be said, that they stand like so many monuments, continually suggestive of the power and spirit of our old religion; but of none is this more true than of Winchester, which still retains the wrecks of so many ancient institutions of piety, and where neither the decay of faith nor the lapse of time has been able entirely to efface the memory of their founders.

The history of the city, moreover, is closely connected with that of the kingdom; we might even say that it was there that our national existence began, in that great assembly of nobles and clergy summoned by Egbert after the submission of the other states of the Heptarchy, which, as some writers tell us, decreed that the whole island should be called England, and that thenceforth all its inhabitants should be known as Englishmen.

There, in the old monastery of Winchester, was nursed the great St. Swithin, in his own time the barrier of England against the Danes; there, too, the royal Confessor held his court; and from the days of Egbert to those of Richard Cœur de Lion, Winchester, rather than London, may be said to have been

the capital of the kingdom. Yet it is remarkable, that among all the great names associated with the city of Winchester, the special and peculiar interest attaches to one which is neither of royal nor of noble lineage; it is that of a man of obscure and humble parentage, not even a scholar, but one who owes his celebrity entirely to his moral worth and to his large-hearted benevolence. There must surely have been something very uncommon in the character of William of Wykeham, the subject of our present sketch, for his memory to have been preserved with veneration even to our own times, and among those most opposed to the faith which he professed; for he is one of the very few great Catholic prelates of England whose name has for the most part escaped the calumnies of posterity, and is honoured alike by Catholics and Protestants as among the best and worthiest that appear on the pages of our history.

He was born in the year 1324, towards the close of the reign of Edward II. His ancestors were of the old stock of English yeomen, a class just removed above that of mere peasants; and his parents were, as it would seem, too lowly to claim the privilege of a settled hereditary surname. This appears for many generations to have remained a distinction peculiar to the nobler born; and we therefore find the family of the future Chancellor of England called indifferently, sometimes by the name of Long, and sometimes by that of Perot, while he himself adopted that of the place of his birth,* namely, the little village of Wykeham, which stands on the borders of Waltham Chase, about half way between Winchester and the sea. Little as is known of the parents of Wykeham, it is certain that they were too poor to provide him with the means of a liberal education; nor would they probably have aspired to any higher lot for their son than to till the lands of the Lords of Wykeham, as they had done before him, and to grow skilful in the science of woodcraft and the use of the English longbow

* This was the almost invariable practice of ecclesiastics, who appear seldom to have retained their family name, but to have adopted that of their birthplace. Thus we have William of Waynflete, Simon of Sudbury, and many others.

in the glades of the royal forest. But a very different destiny awaited him; and the circumstance which first drew him out of obscurity illustrates one of the best features of a feudal state of society, which, with many hardships and exactions, brought also some blessings to the poorer classes. If the tie which bound together the lord and the peasant were one which in our day would be felt as holding the latter in bondage, there was this at least to recommend it, that it *was* a tie; there was a union of interests between the two classes, which often gave birth to kindly feelings and mutual good offices. That Sir Nicholas Uvedale, the lieutenant of Southampton and governor of Winchester Castle, who was nearly related to the lord of the manor of Wykeham, should have been on such free and friendly terms with the poor yeoman as not only to have remarked the quick and ready talent of his son, but also to have gone out of his way to help its cultivation, argues much in favour of the terms then existing between ranks of society now more widely separated. He resolved to give the boy an education, and at an early age sent him to a grammar-school, which occupied the site of the present College of Winchester, where his principal studies were, as we are told, French, geometry, logic, and arithmetic.

The only incident which is preserved of his school-life is one which lets us into a great secret of his character. From his earliest years Wykeham was remarkable for a special gift of devotion; and this is the more worthy of notice in him, because it was united with qualities which many are accustomed to think of a totally opposite description. In the judgment of most men, a devout mind is seldom a practical one; its owner is deemed better suited for meditation than for action, and the world is likely enough to push him aside as one altogether unfit for the real business of life. Now if we want a proof that, notwithstanding this popular view of the matter, devotion is nevertheless not incompatible with a sound and vigorous understanding, we have it in the case of Wykeham. His talents were all of the most essentially practical kind; throughout his life he was distinguished rather as a man of

business than as a profound thinker or an original genius. His mind was just of that class most common among his countrymen in our own day,—active and intelligent, capable of conducting complicated affairs with consummate prudence, and as far as possible removed from any thing fanciful or unreal. Even in his studies, varied as they were in the course of his after-life, he evinced no taste for the abstract and speculative sciences which occupied the scholars of his day. He was a good arithmetician, and a master in the science of geometry; and, above all, he was, as we have just said, an excellent man of business. And yet, with all this, he was devout even from a child; and his devotion was marked by exactly that character of *tenderness* which is supposed to be least in harmony with the practical spirit. He did not deem a deep love of God and of His blessed Mother inconsistent with a plain, common-sense view of things; and the very first thing recorded about him is his singular love of prayer. Whilst still a schoolboy his favourite place of resort was the old cathedral, old even in his day, and full of memorials of the Saxon times; and the long hours he spent within its venerable walls had no small influence upon his after-life. It was scarcely the same cathedral as the one now standing; for, as we shall see, he himself lived to rebuild it almost entirely, substituting throughout a great proportion of the building the exquisite architecture of the fourteenth century for the heavy Norman style which had prevailed in the earlier erection. Yet, though the old church of St. Swithin's, as it was then called, was wanting in much of the architectural beauty which we now admire, it had treasures of its own of which the cathedral of our day is wholly destitute. Like so many of the holy and beautiful houses with which Catholic piety had covered the land, it had been enriched by the devout zeal of successive generations, until it had become a very marvel of all that was glorious in art.

Let us go back in imagination five hundred years, and entering the ever-open doors, let us accompany the young Winchester schoolboy in one of those daily visits of devotion which he was accustomed to make to the shrines and

altars of the old cathedral. What a contrast every thing would present to the modern aspect of the place! At the first glance, we should miss the delicate clustered pillars of the present nave, and might probably be disposed to criticise the massive columns and semicircular arches filling their place as heavy and ungraceful. None of the beautiful chantries which now decorate the church would be seen, these being of a date later than that of which we speak. Yet, in spite of this, we should feel that the old building was warmer and brighter than it now is; and our eyes would wander from one chapel to another, not, as now, empty and deserted, but each furnished with its altar, where, if our visit were an early one, the Masses would be following one another in quick succession, attended in turn by little groups of devout assistants.

Passing up the nave, we should have paused before entering the gates which lead into the choir to admire the great crucifix, with the figures of our Lady and St. John, all in solid gold, and adorned with jewels, which was placed above the rood-screen. It was the gift of Archbishop Stigand; another of similar workmanship, but of smaller size, was presented by Henry de Blois, and stood over the altar. Then, stepping into the choir, the high altar itself would have met our gaze, dazzling us with its extraordinary splendour. Truly no man could doubt that the temples which our forefathers raised were indeed the houses of God. There, at the back, rose the stone reredos, whose delicately-wrought niches contained the images of patron saints; the frontal of the altar was of plated gold enriched with jewels; and in the centre was the tabernacle,—that holy of holies in a Catholic church, whose presence alone would be enough to mark the difference between the ancient and the modern building. It was lofty and of exquisite workmanship, raised still higher on steps, and veiled with draperies richly embroidered in pearls; whilst jewelled reliquaries and images were to be seen between the golden candlesticks which stood on either side. The whole was surmounted by a delicate stone canopy, whose tapering pinnacles might be discerned from the very bottom of the nave; and within this, sus-

pended just above the tabernacle and jewelled crucifix, was the royal crown placed there by Canute as an act of homage to Almighty God, when, on the sea-shore of Southampton, he taught his courtiers that memorable lesson of humility so well known to all readers of English history. And over altar and tabernacle, glittering with gold and gems, fell a soft and many-coloured light from the stained windows of the choir, on which might be traced in gorgeous hues the figures of the patron saints of Winchester.

Behind the high altar, we should have found our way into a chapel where Mass was celebrated every morning directly after chapter, and where devout pilgrims might have been seen at all hours, kneeling before the rich shrine which contained the relics of St. Swithin. Yet further on we should have come to the Lady Chapel, forming the eastern extremity of the building; but its walls, instead of appearing, as now, bare and ruinous, then gleamed with rich colours, being decorated with paintings representing the chief mysteries of our Lady's life, and of various miracles wrought at her intercession, most of which were taken from the history of our own island. These paintings were not merely ornamental, they were intended as the books of the unlearned; and even now the visitor may read inscriptions under some half-defaced paintings still traceable on the walls, with numbers, evidently referring to some book of explanations, and showing that the whole formed a means of popular instruction, such as was very commonly used in earlier ages. Doubtless this spot was one of frequent resort to Wykeham; and so too, we may infer, was the little chapel hard by, which, from the decorations still remaining, is supposed to have been dedicated to the guardian angels. Possibly it was in this chapel that he first learnt that love for the blessed spirits of heaven which appears to have been one of his favourite devotions, and of which he has left monuments which still remain in the colleges of his foundation. But one altar there was still dearer and more familiar to him than any we have yet named; and thither we will now conduct our readers. Between the fifth and sixth pillars on the southern side of the nave, exactly on the spot now occupied by his own

beautiful chantry, there stood at that time an altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin; her image might be seen above it; and here a very early Mass was daily said, which was commonly termed the "Pekis-mass," from the name of the monk by whom it was generally celebrated. This image and altar was a place of popular devotion; many graces had been granted there, and the pillars were covered with the votive offerings of our Lady's grateful clients; but by none was the place more frequented than by Wykeham, who every morning assisted at the Pekis-mass, and paid his early devotions before the image of her whom he had chosen from the cradle to be his special mother and patroness. It is thus that the manuscript of Winchester College records this circumstance of his early life: "The venerable father, whilst following his studies at Winchester, was ever most devout to God and holy Church, and was wont to frequent that spot where afterwards his body was laid; and there, before an image of the most blessed Virgin Mary, he every day made special prayers, being accustomed to hear the early Mass of a certain monk, which was vulgarly called the Pekis-mass: thus in childhood conquering the disposition to sloth, and watching unto prayer, according to the words of the blessed Apostle St. Peter." And in the register of the same college it is added: "He held it a sweet custom in these early years to frequent the church, making many prayers, and often assisting at Mass. He had, moreover, a true and special devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, in whose honour he often visited the church of St. Swithin, praying with bended knees before her image, which then stood against one of the pillars of the said church, and humbly beseeching her that he might become worthy to honour, not her only, but also her Divine Son." The love he bore this little sanctuary must have been of no ordinary kind, for we shall find that in the hour of death his thoughts wandered back to the scene of his boyish devotion; and in his last will he gave directions that his body might be laid on the spot where he had so often knelt, and where he had first learnt the sweetness of familiar intercourse with God.

It is evident from what we have said that Wykeham's devotion to our Lady was something special and more than ordinary; and it is so spoken of by all his biographers. He himself was wont to acknowledge himself as indebted to her for all the blessings of his life, and to attribute all his success to her powerful patronage. "He seems," says a Protestant writer,* speaking of his early years, "even then to have chosen her as his peculiar patroness, to have placed himself under her protection, and in a manner to have dedicated himself to her service." This is well nigh all we know of his boyhood, but it is enough; the simple fact that he was a child of Mary, "dedicated to her service" whilst all the grace and purity of baptism still rested on him in its untarnished brightness, tells us the whole secret of his spiritual life. Who needs be told of the peculiar loveliness of a soul that has been early consecrated to Mary, and through life has kept itself true and loyal to her sweet and gracious sovereignty? The fragrance of its humility, its purity, its deep interior peace, has been made familiar to us in the lives of a thousand saints; and if it be true that among all the varieties of sanctity with which God has enriched His Church, a special charm attaches to those the freshness of whose innocence has been kept unsullied under the sheltering mantle of the Queen of Virgins, we may safely claim our readers' interest in the Winchester schoolboy, of whom as yet we know no more than that for the love of Mary he rose at day-break, and daily offered himself and his whole being to God through her maternal hands.

When his school-education was over, Uvedale did not desert him: he took him into his own family, where he discharged the office of secretary. Uvedale, as constable of the castle, resided at Winchester; and it was here, as is generally supposed, that the young secretary had the opportunity of first displaying his taste and skill in architecture, on the occasion of certain repairs and alterations made in the building by his patron. He soon became a favourite with the governor; and, indeed, he had many of those natural gifts which are calculated to win men's favour

* Dr. Lowth, Bishop of Oxford.

and esteem. He was short in stature, but his noble bearing was such as scarcely betokened a lowly birth; and he had a peculiarly graceful and appropriate manner of expressing himself, so that, we are told, "whether he wrote or spoke, he was never at a loss for words." He wrote, too, in clear and beautiful characters,—a valuable accomplishment in those days; and we may easily fancy that the brave constable, who was more of a soldier than a scholar, must have found a treasure in his secretary, with his ready flow of words and his beautiful penmanship. It was soon discovered that he could transact business quite as well in person as in writing, and that his tongue was no less eloquent than his pen. It was on the occasion of some services of more than usual importance which he had rendered to Sir Nicholas, that the latter, wishing still further to advance him, introduced him to the notice of William de Edington, or Edyndon, the newly-elected Bishop of Winchester, who was at that time treasurer to King Edward III. Some writers represent him as having studied at Oxford during this period of his life; but this is more than doubtful, and is in direct contradiction to the fact so constantly stated by all early historians, of his never having received a learned education.

He was still very young when Edington first introduced him to the notice of the king, in whose service he thenceforth remained. Reference is made to the early age at which he entered the royal service in some of the licenses granted to his colleges by Richard II., who speaks of him as having "even from his youth worthily and faithfully served both his father and grandfather by his counsels and opportune aids in many weighty affairs, wherein he often bore both labours and expense." The exact circumstances which first attracted the notice of the king do not appear; we find, however, that not long after the celebrated siege of Calais, Edward III., having returned to England, spent some days at Winchester; and it was probably on this occasion that Wykeham's handsome person and graceful address, and, above all, his engineering and architectural talents, won for him the royal favour. "He was," says Harpsfield, "another Euclid in geometry;" and he had already earned a

reputation as an architect. Edward was just then full of building plans, and the Bishop of Winchester could hardly have done him a more acceptable service than by presenting him with one well qualified to carry them into execution. Nor was it long before the merits and attractive manners of the young architect secured for him a degree of friendship and intimacy, both with the king and his gallant son the Black Prince, to which the office occupied by Wykeham, as well as his lowly birth, would scarcely have entitled him. "He was," we are told, "before long admitted among the first and principal of the king's familiar friends." Of the history of the next ten years of his life we know nothing; even the exact position he occupied in the king's service appears uncertain; and the first appointment which he appears to have received was to an ecclesiastical benefice, the living, namely, of Irstead in Norfolk, which was bestowed on him so early as the year 1349, though he had not as yet received even minor orders. It appears, however, from the title of *clericus* attached to his name in several of the royal patents, that he had already determined on embracing the ecclesiastical state, and had received the tonsure.

In 1356 we find him appointed clerk of the king's works in the manors of Henley and Yeshampstead, by a patent wherein his fidelity and circumspection are commended as worthy of the royal trust and confidence; and a few months later he was named surveyor and chief custodian of the yet more important works then in hand at the park and castle of Windsor; he being, as we are assured, at the period of this appointment renowned as the most skilful architect in the kingdom. The works at Windsor on which he was engaged were undertaken by King Edward III., immediately after that celebrated festival of St. George which had witnessed the foundation of the new Order of the Garter, amid all the pomp and pride of chivalric display. The scheme contemplated by the king was to make Windsor the home and centre of the Order, which did not merely confer an empty title of honour on its members, but included many charitable and religious objects. The chapel now dedicated to St. George, which had been

begun in the previous reign, was completed ; and by a bull of Pope Clement VI. a college of canons was attached to it, for the perpetual celebration of the divine offices, and for the maintenance of a certain number of poor knights, who were to pray for the souls of the knights-companions living and dead. It was at the altar of this chapel, on the festival above named, that five-and-twenty of the best knights of England, headed by their gallant sovereign, offered their arms to God, and solemnly consecrated themselves to His service. It was like the inauguration of a reign of romance, the design being gravely set forth to be the restoration of King Arthur's round table, which, according to the tradition then popularly received, had been established at the castle founded in old time at Windsor by that renowned hero. All the nobles of England were summoned to attend the ceremony, and heralds had proclaimed it through every nation in Europe, offering a passport of fifteen days to all knights and esquires, of whatever country and language, who might desire to assist at the spectacle. The invitation was largely accepted, for Edward's scheme was exactly in harmony with the tastes of the age ; "it appeared to all men," says Froissart, "highly honourable, and capable of increasing love and friendship." So there were tournaments and most quaint shows and devices—all the display of chivalry, at this its most showy, though not perhaps its purest and most illustrious age ; and when the brilliant festival was over, Edward determined on forming the buildings already commenced by his predecessor into a vast royal castle, which was to be the home and centre of all Christian knighthood. This was in 1344 ; so that it would seem that the works must have advanced but slowly before they were put into Wykeham's hands. It needed but a rapid inspection from his correct and masterly eye to convince him that no grand or harmonious design could ever result from patching together and adding to the erections of less skilful architects ; and it was by his advice, therefore, that in 1359 Edward consented to clear the ground of the greater part of the buildings already standing, and recommence the whole work on a uniform plan. The works were now set forward in good earnest ; three

hundred and sixty masons were pressed for the purpose, according to the arbitrary custom of the day; and the buildings were carried on for more than seven years with no stint of expenditure. At the end of that time, a sum equivalent to 50,000*l.* of our money had been charged to the works of Windsor, and the castle was completed on a grand and majestic scale. The towers, and most of the ancient part still standing, are portions of Wykeham's work. A story has been told in connection with his architectural labours at Windsor, and repeated by all his biographers, till it has become too popular for us to omit; though most writers agree in thinking it of doubtful authenticity. It is said, however, that when the building was finished, he caused to be sculptured on one of the walls a scroll, with the words, "This made Wykeham." The courtiers, continues the story, jealous of the favour shown by the king to one they despised as a low-born adventurer, represented to their royal master that his architect had done this in order to claim for himself the credit of the whole undertaking. Edward's pride was roused; but Wykeham appeased his anger by explaining his meaning to be, not that he had made the castle, but that the castle had made him, inasmuch as it had secured for him the royal patronage and favour. This tale, familiar as it has become, rests, however, on nothing better than idle tradition. Archbishop Parker is the first who relates it, without reference to his authority; and probably its only worth is as an apt illustration of the ambiguity of our English tongue, which, as Parker remarks, "rarely discriminates in its cases."

Meanwhile the services rendered by Wykeham to the king were receiving the most substantial acknowledgments; preferments, both civil and ecclesiastical, were rapidly heaped upon him; and his acceptance of these ecclesiastical benefices before he had yet received even minor orders, and as a mere means of revenue, tarnishes in some degree a character otherwise so stainless in its integrity. The holding of benefices by laymen, and the existence of pluralities, were, indeed, among the abuses of the times, and Wykeham's case was not a singular one; nevertheless it is a disagreeable feature in his early life, and probably

gave rise to the charge brought against him by his enemies of an over love of money. In 1357 he was presented to the rectory of Pulham in Norfolk; which presentation was immediately opposed by the Pope's consistory at Rome, which prosecuted him for illegally holding this benefice, together with many others that had cure of souls; but we are told that King Edward confirmed it to him by patent under the great seal, in order to enable him by royal authority to hold it at the same time with other preferments. If this were all that we knew of the matter, we could not acquit Wykeham of a grave offence, in supporting himself in an illegal position by the power of the crown exerted in opposition to the law of the Church; but, happily for his good fame, we find the dispute terminated three years later by his own voluntary resignation of the benefice. A pluralist, however, he certainly was; and we dare not make so large a demand on the patience of our readers as to give them the list of his church preferments as they stand in Dr. Lowth's biography, where their mere enumeration occupies several pages. They included seventeen prebendal stalls, three rectories, the archdeaconry of Lincoln, and the deanery of St. Martin-le-Grand. Their revenues amounted to the sum of 870*l.*, an immense amount in those days; and we can only say in justification of their holder, that if his wealth, and the source whence it was derived, earns for him any portion of our readers' displeasure, the good use he made of his money must be taken as making no small atonement.

It must not, however, be supposed that he held *all* these preferments whilst still a layman, though some sinecures undoubtedly he did so hold. We find him ordained acolyte in 1361, by his old patron Bishop Edington; early in the following year he received the orders of subdeacon and deacon; and finally, in 1362, he was ordained priest by the same Bishop in his chapel at Southwark. The deanery of St. Martin's he held only three years, during which time he rebuilt at his own expense the whole of the church and cloister.

His character as an ecclesiastic did not in any way interfere with his labours as chief warden and architect of

the royal castles. In 1361 we find him busily engaged in the difficult task of erecting a castle on the swampy island of Sheppey, at the mouth of the Thames, "for the strength of the realm and the protection of the inhabitants." The coasts of England suffered grievously in those days by descents of French and other marauders, and a better site could not have been chosen for the new castle of Queenborough, as it was called in compliment to the good queen Philippa of Hainault. Unusual obstacles in the ground did but call forth the skill of the architect: the soil being too soft to sustain the walls, they were built on wooden piles driven into the ground; and a stately castle was thus raised on the desolate spot. No ruins, however, now remain of the noble keep, "shaped like a five-leafed rose," with its five towers of defence; nor of the grand embattled gateway, and the raised platforms for the deadly discharge of arrows. It is probable that most of the other royal castles were either rebuilt or repaired about the same time by the same masterly hand.

But Wykeham's position in the royal councils was one of far higher trust than we should gather from the character of his employments. Just before his ordination as acolyte, we find him appearing as one of the "six masters, noble men," who were witnesses to the solemn ratification of the treaty of Bretigni; and the fact of his assisting at the ceremony in that character proves that the surveyor of the royal works had come to be a man of some importance at court. This celebrated treaty promised a close to the long wars between France and England, which had lasted through the greater part of Edward's reign; wars unjust in their origin, though the injustice has been concealed from our view by the brilliancy of those achievements and victories which still render the names of Cressy and Poitiers so dear to English ears. Nevertheless, as we have said before, the chivalry of the French wars was a very different chivalry from that of the Crusades: men were beginning to fight for glory rather than for a good and noble cause, for national aggrandisement instead of the defence of the faith. The whole history of Edward's reign is a proof that the religious element of chivalry had

already begun to decay ; although, even in its decay, there was not wanting evidence to show how strong had once been its preponderance. Up to the victory of Poitiers, which left King John of France a prisoner in the hands of the Black Prince, fortune had seemed to favour the pretensions of the English monarch. But on the recommencement of hostilities the tide turned against him. Looking haughtily on the French people, as though they were lying at his mercy, he would accept of no terms from them but unconditional submission. The very extravagance of his demands provoked their national spirit, and roused them to a gallant resistance. The campaign of 1360 was a disastrous one to the English ; it had none of those brilliant successes which had hitherto attended their arms ; and but a few months after the English king had landed at Calais, at the head of an army so magnificent that, it is said, its equal had not been raised in the island for more than a century, he had the mortification of beholding it in full retreat from the walls of Paris, in all the confusion and suffering that accompany defeat. Not, indeed, that any great reverse had attended their arms ; but Heaven itself seemed to rebuke the unholy ambition which alone prolonged the war, and to fight against the standards of Edward. Famine thinned his troops : yet to every overture of peace he still returned the same haughty demands, requiring absolute sovereignty over the third part of France as a condition of his renouncing his claim to the French crown, which had been the original pretext for the war ; and these terms the French as resolutely rejected. It was at Chartres, that city so dear to Frenchmen, and deemed by them under the peculiar and perpetual protection of the Blessed Virgin, that the pride and obstinacy of Edward were broken at last by what seemed an expression of the Divine displeasure. The French envoys and the Pope's legate had equally failed in their efforts to shake his stern and implacable temper ; the very sufferings of his army appeared to have no power to move him. It was now in full retreat ; want and fatigue had combined to reduce its numbers ; and the road towards Brittany was to be tracked by the dead bodies of men and horses. As they approached

Chartres, the troops were overtaken by a storm, so terrible, that nothing similar to it is recorded in history;* wind, hail, and lightning, seemed all to unite in order to wreak their fury on the unhappy soldiers, already more than half exhausted. Thousands are said to have perished on that one night without an enemy's arm being raised to strike them; and in the midst of the frightful scene, the conscience of the king was roused from slumber. "The sight of his followers perishing around him awakened in his heart a sense of the horrors occasioned by his ambition. In a fit of remorse he sprang from his saddle, and stretching his arm towards the cathedral of Chartres, he vowed to God and the Virgin that he would no longer object to proposals of peace, provided they were compatible with the preservation of his honour."†

The treaty of Bretigni, usually called "the great peace," was the result; and it was at the solemn ratification of this treaty, which took place at Calais, that we find Wykeham assisting for the first time in the capacity of an officer of the state. The scene was every way characteristic of the age, and had all the solemnity of a religious ceremony. in conformity with that great principle which, amid a thousand errors, still gave to the semi-barbarous period of the middle ages one vast superiority over our own,—that principle which recognised no act, whether political or domestic, from which the power and influence of the Christian faith were to be excluded,—the treaty which was to restore peace between two great nations was to be no mere signing of papers between state-ministers, but a religious transaction, ratified by an oath solemnly administered to both sovereigns before the altar of God. "Edward and John met in the church of St. Nicholas, ascended the steps, and knelt together before the platform of the altar. Audoyne, abbot of Clugny, the papal envoy, who celebrated Mass, turned to them after the consecration, holding in his hand the paten with the Sa-

* Froissart says, that it seemed as though the world had come to an end, and that the hailstones were so large as to kill both men and beasts.

† Lingard.

cred Host upon it, and having by his side the Bishops of Winchester and Boulogne, who supported the Missal. He recapitulated in their hearing the chief articles of the treaty to which they were going to swear. Then Edward, after a short pause, addressed the King of France. 'Fair brother,' he said, 'I warn you that it is not my intention to be bound by this oath, unless you on your part faithfully observe all the articles of this treaty.' John signified his assent; and placing one hand on the paten, and the other on the Missal, he swore by the Body of Christ and the holy Gospels. He was followed by Edward; and a similar oath was administered to twenty-four French and twenty-seven English princes and barons."*

Wykeham's advance was now rapid: in 1363 he was appointed warden and justiciary of the king's forests south of the Trent; the next year saw him keeper of the privy-seal; two years later he is styled secretary to the king; and a little afterwards we find him addressed as "chief of the Privy Council," a title which seems to indicate that he was then considered one of the principal ministers of state. When, in 1366, he was called on, in obedience to the new bull of Pope Urban V. against pluralities, to give an account of all his preferments to the metropolitan, we find him spoken of as "Sir William de Wykeham, Archdeacon of Lincoln, Secretary of our lord the illustrious King of England, and Keeper of his Privy Seal."

Froissart bears witness to the influence he exerted over the royal counsels. "There was," he says, "at this time a priest about the King of England, who was so great with the king that all things were done by him, and without him was nothing done." He was no longer employed as a mere surveyor of public works, but on the most honourable and important affairs of state. The victory of Neville's Cross had placed David King of Scotland as a prisoner in Edward's hands; and Wykeham was among the commissioners despatched to the north to arrange the terms of his ransom and to negotiate a truce. In one act of pardon he is termed "the chief of the Privy Council, and the Governor of the Great Council." The

* Lingard.

exact office held under these titles can scarcely be stated, but it is quite evident that he was acting as what we should now call a minister of state. There is sufficient evidence that in this capacity his influence was constantly exerted in support of a liberal and enlightened policy; for Wykeham was as far as possible removed from those royal favourites who seek to build their own fortunes out of the plunder of the nation. The MS. of Winchester College particularly refers to his efforts to relieve the national burdens. "He constantly preserved the people of the land" (it is said) "from subsidies, exactions, and other like oppressions." And remembering how large an advance was made during the reign of the third Edward towards the constitutional liberty of his subjects, we cannot doubt that many rights then granted to them were obtained by the counsels of Wykeham, who ever showed himself a firm and disinterested supporter of the popular cause.

The union of the two characters of statesman and ecclesiastic may appear to some as strange as that of ecclesiastic and royal architect; but at that time there was nothing unusual in such a combination. In days when every man was a soldier, few besides churchmen had the amount of education necessary to qualify them for public business; and though Wykeham was, as we have seen, deficient in scholastic learning, and had never studied at any university, yet his acquirements were precisely those most valuable in a public minister; he being, as John of Malvern expresses it, "very acute, and a man of prodigious industry." His biographer, Dr. Thomas Chaundler, tells us that though he never went through any of the schools, either of arts, theology, or either kind of law, "yet in practical wisdom he was a most wise man." Moreover, by the "prodigious industry" above alluded to he made up for the deficiencies of his early education, and amassed an amount of learning which surpassed in degree that of most men of his own standing, as it appears also in many respects to have differed from it in kind.

However, though there was nothing unusual in the fact of a churchman administering the affairs of the king-

dom, it was somewhat unprecedented for such powers to be exercised by a simple priest; and Edward, who was resolved on elevating him to the highest offices of the state, determined at the same time to make his ecclesiastical dignity keep pace with his position in the royal counsels. This appears to have been one of his motives for proposing the elevation of his favourite minister to the episcopacy; but it is quite evident that his political consequence could not have been Wykeham's only, or even his principal, recommendation to the vacant see of Winchester. Had he exhibited no better qualification for such a promotion than the services he had rendered as an architect, as warden of the royal forests, or even as royal secretary and keeper of the privy seal,—we should have found some traces of popular indignation, or, more probably still, of graver censures from the ever-watchful See of Rome, when the news was spread abroad that the able minister who had built up his fortunes by his own unwearied labours was about to be placed among the mitred prelates of England. Far from this being the case, however, we find him universally acknowledged as the fittest man for the sacred charge about to be imposed upon him. One dissentient voice alone can we detect amid the otherwise general murmur of applause: it is the sneer uttered by a morose and fanatic priest, whose career, as it was contemporary with that of Wykeham, may well be contrasted with it in its character and results. It came from Wickliff, who, in one of his incendiary tracts published at the time of Wykeham's elevation, remarks that nowadays “lords will not present a clerk able and cunning in God's law, but a kitchen clerk, or a penny clerk, or *one wise in building castles*, or in worldly doing, though he cannot well read his Psalter.” He certainly did not foresee, as he wrote these words, that the man he thus sought to depreciate for his supposed ignorance was destined to do more for the advancement of learning than any other prelate who had yet appeared in the English Church; and he perhaps as little looked forward to the occasion which should bring him in personal conflict with the despised, castle-building Bishop. If we may credit Wood, ‘he his-

torian of Oxford, there were not wanting jealous tongues among the courtiers who repeated the calumnious sneer. Some of them, he tells us, represented to the king that his secretary's want of learning rendered him unworthy of the dignity to which he proposed to raise him. Wykeham's reply shows that his thoughts had already revolved some such scheme for the promotion of education as that he afterwards so nobly realised. "Sire," he said to the king, "I am indeed unworthy; but wherein I am wanting myself, I will supply by a brood of more scholars than all the prelates of England have ever shown."

Difficulties, however, lay in the way of Wykeham's succession to the see of Winchester. Edington, the late Bishop and his own early friend, died on the 8th October 1366; and the king at once recommended his secretary to the election of the prior and convent of St. Swithin's, who formed the cathedral chapter. But this election in virtue of the royal *congé-d'élire* was an encroachment on the rights of the Holy See, which had reserved to itself the next appointment of the bishopric during the lifetime of Edington. The question in debate was not the fitness of Wykeham for the post, for almost immediately on his election by the chapter we find the Pope nominating him *administrator* of the spiritualities and temporalities of the see; but he could not give leave for his consecration as *Bishop* until the important point was settled from whom he was to derive his jurisdiction, whether from the See of Peter or from the English crown. In fact, the matter involved that old dispute between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities which was eventually destined to separate England from the unity of the Church altogether; and the manner in which the question was in the present case set at rest bears high testimony to the respect entertained for Wykeham's character as an ecclesiastic. Had his advancement to the episcopate been a mere act of court favour and convenience, to which his own merits and qualifications in no way entitled him, nothing would have been easier than for the Pope to set aside his election altogether. The right of appointment to vacant bishoprics was then a matter of fierce dispute between the Holy See

and the English crown; and for the Pope at such a juncture to accept a person nominated by the king, was in appearance to pay some degree of deference to the royal claims. Wykeham's supposed deficiency in ecclesiastical learning would certainly, had it really existed, have constituted a sufficiently solid ground for resisting his nomination; and we are therefore forced to conclude that his merits must needs have been very great in the eyes of both parties, when we find them mutually agreeing to waive something of their jealously-contested rights in order to hasten his consecration.

The matter was settled by compromise; the Duke of Bourbon, one of the French hostages, undertaking the delicate negotiation. The Pope's bull of provision, as it was termed, was addressed to "William *Bishop-elect* of Winchester," the validity of the election being thus acknowledged; while, on the other hand, the king in his letters-patent, wherein he grants him the temporalities of his see, acknowledges him "*Bishop of Winchester by the Pope's provision*," without naming his election.

In the papal bull by which Urban V. gives leave for his consecration, he is spoken of as recommended to this dignity "for his knowledge of letters, his goodness of life and manners, and his prudence and circumspection in affairs both spiritual and temporal;" phrases which do not appear to be part of the usual formula, and which assuredly would not have been inserted had Wykeham been nothing but the ignorant clerk, cunning only in building castles, that Wickliff had represented him.

This affair of his nomination as Bishop took a full year to settle, and before its termination he was raised to the highest office in the state, being made Lord High Chancellor of England in the September of 1367. In the Record Office of Westminster, among other more important papers, may yet be seen the "Memorandum of divers things bought for the breakfast of the Lord Chancellor and Treasurer William de Wykeham, and of many other magnates of the council of my lord the king," with the exact number of goats, buzzards, doves, shrimps, and congers there consumed, together with the charges of

John the cook. But a more splendid and solemn festival was held in the following month, when he received episcopal consecration, in the cathedral church of St. Paul's, from the hands of the primate, Simon de Langham; and, in the July of the next year, was formally enthroned in his own cathedral of Winchester by the procurator of the Cardinal Archdeacon of Canterbury.

It must have been a touching and wonderful ceremony to him. Amid the splendour of the pontifical rites, did his eyes, think you, never wander down the nave, and rest, blinded with devout and grateful tears, on the spot where he had so often knelt in boyish days, and on the image of her whom his heart still owned as his Mistress and his Mother? To many it might have been an unwelcome humiliation to be appointed to a see where the story of his humble origin and early fortunes was so perfectly known, and where these things might have been made the subject of continual petty mortifications. But Wykeham's mind was superior to pettiness of every kind. It is hinted by several writers that his appointment to the see of Winchester rather than to that of Canterbury, which was also vacant a little before the death of Edington, was in accordance with his own wishes, and that his choice of the inferior dignity arose from the love he bore his native place. So far from considering his lowly birth and the manner in which he had raised himself from obscurity by his own talents and labour as any reproach, he looked on it as a subject of honest pride, which he evinced in a way sufficiently significant in those times when heraldry was a sort of emblematical language, and the devices which each man chose were supposed to embody some favourite principle, or to refer to some eventful incident in his family history. Every trade and profession had then its heraldic device; and Wykeham was content to choose for his coat-of-arms that usually assigned to the craft of carpenters and house-builders, in allusion to his early profession, adding the motto, "Manners maketh man."

We cannot but feel some surprise when we find the noble biographer of the English chancellors detecting nothing more in this celebrated motto than an acknowledg-

ment of "how much he owed to his delicate attention to the feelings of others."* As though the "manners" here alluded to were those little acts of courtesy or courtliness by which a man may hope to win the favour of those who can help him on in life. Assuredly Wykeham intended to give expression to some loftier principle than this: his motto was the utterance of that noble independence of mind which was the distinguishing feature of his character; and by it he would have us to understand that a man's true nobility consists less in his ancient blood, or official dignity, than in the uprightness of his heart and conduct. In no country or age is such a principle more needful to be remembered than our own, where talents and industry are every day raising men above the station to which they were born, and wealth is continually disputing the preëminence with hereditary nobility. Where this is the case, there is always the temptation for a man to be ashamed of his lowly origin, and to assume the pretensions of a higher rank. But Wykeham's motto should ring in the ears of all such, unceasingly reminding them, that where nobility of birth is wanting, nobility of soul—that is, a simple following of the laws of Christian courtesy and Christian justice—will amply supply the defect, and make a lowly origin itself a source of honour to him who has raised himself by his merits. Among the very few of Wykeham's words which have been preserved to posterity, there occurs a simple saying, often in his mouth, which shows how deeply graven in his heart was the feeling which his motto expressed: "There can be no true dignity," he was wont to say, "where there is no high principle." In the career on which he was now entering, we shall see how perfectly he justified his own words, and satisfied the world that no royal patent of nobility could have shed half the lustre on his name that was cast on it by his own upright life and munificent benevolence.

* Lord Campbell.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHANCELLOR-BISHOP.

IN the preceding pages we have had to draw somewhat on our readers' patience. Wykeham's public career, or rather that portion of it which is best known, and possesses the greatest interest, did not commence till he was forty-three years of age. Up to that time, we have but the brief imperfect memoranda which indicate to us the persevering labours by which he was ascending from obscurity to greatness. Some, indeed, may be disposed at this stage of our story to question his title to greatness altogether, and to class him with a multitude of other plodding, business-like men, who have learnt and practised the art of getting-on in life. Such men can never become popular heroes: we are provoked at being forced into unwilling praise of their painstaking cleverness; but admiration, in its truest sense, we never give them; for a hero must possess some higher claim upon our sympathy than mere success.

But, as we have just hinted, our story is as yet scarcely begun. During all this time Wykeham had been passing through a severe ordeal: he had been exposed to all those worldly influences whose effects are usually the most corrupting; and yet, when he came back to minister as chief pastor in the church which thirty years before had been the scene of his youthful devotions, he brought with him a heart whose simplicity and fervour had been kept untarnished and unchanged.

He was not, however, able to enter at once on the administration of his diocese. It wanted him badly enough; for during the lifetime of the late Bishop both its spiritualities and temporalities had been somewhat depressed. But Wykeham's duties as chancellor detained him at court, and it appears probable that, up to the period of his first visitation, which he held in 1373, he was obliged to leave most of the government of his see in the hands of his commissary-general, John de Wormenhale. In fact, however crying were the wants of his diocese, those of the kingdom were just then yet more urgent. A fresh war had broken

out since the conclusion of the treaty of Bretigni. The French provinces ceded to the English crown had been assigned to the government of the Black Prince, with the title of Prince of Aquitaine. He fixed his residence at Bourdeaux, where his great renown drew round him the most brilliant court in Christendom. It was looked on as the home of all true knighthood, and every one who was in distress deemed he could do no better than appeal for protection to the chivalry of the Prince of Aquitaine. It was on this romantic principle of succouring the distressed, without regard to their merit, that he engaged in a war for the restoration of one of the most bloody and perfidious princes who had ever disgraced a royal crown. This was Pedro the Cruel, king of Castile, whose crimes are thus briefly enumerated by Froissart: "He had by different means caused the death of the mother of his three half-brothers, which, as was natural, caused them great displeasure: he had banished and murdered all the greatest barons of Castile. He was withal of such a horrid disposition, that all men feared, suspected, and hated him, but dared not show it." To which he adds, that he had poisoned his wife, had made an alliance with the infidels, had seized the ecclesiastical revenues, cast the priests of holy Church into prison, and vexed them with all sorts of tyranny. The Pope calling him to appear at Avignon, and clear himself of these foul charges, he drove away the ambassadors of the Holy Father with insults. Then his subjects rose against him; and, weary of the yoke of such a monster, chose his half-brother Henry to reign in his stead. Urban V. in solemn consistory excommunicated him as an infidel; the King of Arragon offered free passage through his kingdom to all who desired to enter Castile and attack King Pedro; whilst in France, nearly every knight of honour and renown joined the standard of Henry, and prepared to take part in a war which they looked on almost as a crusade.

The Black Prince alone refused to join the expedition; in his eye it was a violation of the laws of chivalry; and accordingly, when, a few months later, Don Pedro was driven as a fugitive from his kingdom, the few friends who

kept faithful to him could offer him no better advice than to throw himself on the generosity of the Prince of Wales. "He is," they said, "of such a noble and gallant disposition, that he will certainly take compassion on you; and if he be determined to restore you to your throne, none can withstand him; for he is dreaded by the whole world, and beloved by all true knights." Pedro acted on this advice: he appealed to the knightly honour of the prince to restore him to his rights; and the appeal was heard. It soon became known that the standards of Edward were once more displayed, and ere long a numerous and gallant army gathered around what men had learnt to look upon as the ensigns of certain victory. A campaign followed, glorious in its achievements, yet, as it proved, most disastrous in its ultimate results to the English. Never was a bad cause more gallantly maintained. Pedro was forced back upon a nation that detested him; and the military renown of the Black Prince gained additional lustre at the great victory of Navaretto. But Pedro, once restored to his crown, proved faithless to all his engagements: he refused to furnish his allies with either money or provisions, and left them to gather what subsistence they could out of the plunder of his own unhappy peasantry. A fatal sickness fastened on the prince, which eventually bore him to his grave. He returned to Aquitaine, enfeebled with disease, and embarrassed by enormous expenses which he had no means of meeting; and a full tide of disaster set in upon him. Unable to keep his engagements with his troops, or to satisfy their just demands, his wounded honour felt the disgrace which had been thrust on him by the perfidy of his ally; and soon complaints came in from all quarters of the outrages committed by his "free companies," who, short of pay, made incursions through France, "doing," says Froissart, "so much mischief, and such wicked acts, as caused great tribulation." To relieve himself from his difficulties, he proposed to lay a tax on the lands of his French subjects; and then all Aquitaine rose in arms. Under the vassalage of France they had borne no taxes, and they would suffer none to be imposed by an English prince. The French king fomented the discord, and sum-

moned Edward, as his vassal, to Paris, to answer the complaints of his oppressed subjects. "We will willingly attend," was his fierce reply, "since the King of France sends for us; but it shall be with our helmet on our head, and at the head of sixty thousand men."

In short, "the great peace" was at an end. Hostilities broke out in every province subject to the English arms; but the hero, who had hitherto led those arms to certain victory, was now forced to remain sick and inactive at Bourdeaux, a prey to bitter melancholy, as week after week brought the news of some fresh disaster, and told of some new province torn from his enfeebled grasp. Ponthieu was irrecoverably lost, nor was this the worst; for before long it became evident that the English would have to stand on the defensive upon their own shores. The Scots were in alliance with the French, and threatened the northern frontier of the kingdom; whilst tidings came that great armaments of ships were being prepared in all the ports of France, for the purpose of invading and laying waste the English coasts. "The king did not know which part to guard the most," says Froissart; "and, to speak truth, the English were very much alarmed." In spite of his declining years and failing energies, King Edward prepared for a defence which should be worthy of his great renown. Large detachments of men were sent northwards to keep the Scots at bay; whilst a fleet was manned with incredible despatch, which swept the English Channel, and cleared it of every enemy. The disingenuous conduct of the King of France had annulled the engagements of the treaty of Bretigni; and Edward resolved at once to demand of his parliament whether, under these circumstances, he did not stand justified in re-assuming his old pretensions on the French crown.

Such was the state of affairs when, on the 27th of May 1369, the great Council of the English nation was assembled in the painted chamber of Westminster Palace, and Wykeham for the first time appeared before them to exercise his office of chancellor, by declaring to them, in the king's name, the causes of their meeting. He did so in a way at once unusual, and characteristic of his peculiar

simplicity and independence of mind. Up to his time, it had been the custom with the chancellors of England to deliver their addresses to parliament after the fashion of a theological disputation. "It was almost their constant practice," says Dr. Lowth, "to lay down some text of Scripture by way of thesis for their discourse, and to spend some time in dividing and subdividing it, and making very injudicious applications of it to the occasion. Not satisfied with this, they would frequently go out of their way to introduce still more quotations of Scripture, and would continue their discourse as impertinently as they began it." Wykeham was the first who broke through this custom, and thought fit to speak to the point in question in the language of a statesman. His speech was delivered, moreover, not in Latin, but in the Norman-French language; and in it he gave a plain and straightforward account of the whole state of public affairs. A few days later, the lords and commons with one consent made answer to the king, that "he might with a good conscience take to himself the style and title of King of France, and use his arms as heretofore."

In consequence of this decision, new seals were engraved, bearing the lilies of France quartered with the lions of England, and delivered to the keeping of the lord chancellor. Every effort was made to carry on the war with vigour, and to sustain the credit of the English name; but the national spirit of the French was fairly roused. "Every man-at-arms in France was eager to do battle with the Prince of Wales," says Froissart; and whilst the English fought for honour and for conquest, the arms of the French were nerved with the resolve to restore the liberty of their country, and to drive the intruding foreigners back upon their own shores. City after city fell into their hands, or their garrisons declared themselves Frenchmen; and still the sickness of the prince gained ground, so that at length he was unable to mount his war-horse, and a moody melancholy spread over his soul. Alas for the greatness of the world's best heroes, when it rests on no better foundation than that of human honour! The Black Prince is represented in history as the mirror of chivalry,

and so perhaps he was; but let it be well noted that the chivalry of which he was the model was the chivalry of honour, and not that of the Cross. The distance which separates a character such as his from the standard aimed at by Godfrey de Bouillon, or the great Tancred, marks the vast interval between a heroism which has its origin in human passion, and that which is guided by a lofty principle of faith. Gregory XI. repeatedly complains, that whilst the arms of the French and English were turned against one another, the power of the infidel was daily on the increase. In fact, the date of the victory of Poitiers corresponds within a few years with that of the first settlement of the Turks on the European shores: there was no longer an army of the Cross to keep them back. In the hour of conquest and success, Edward the Black Prince dazzled all Europe by his gallantry, his honour, his romantic and punctilious courtesy to a fallen enemy; in the hour of disaster and disappointment, he stained his great name by cruel and vindictive acts, and the slaughter of Limoges went far to wipe out the glory of Poitiers and Navarette. When tidings came to him that Limoges had become French, he swore by the soul of his father to be revenged on the citizens; and terribly did he keep his oath. The city fell, and three thousand innocent beings,—men, women, and children,—who had had no part in the treachery of the garrison, were slaughtered in cold blood; whilst the prince lay in his litter, and coldly turned away from those who begged for mercy at his feet. “There was no heart in Limoges so hardened,” says Froissart, “or that had any sense of religion, that did not bewail the events of that day;” and the dreadful scene seemed to bring its own punishment with it, by increasing the black and heavy depression which weighed down the soul of Edward, and against which it was harder for him to struggle than against bodily sickness itself. His eldest son died about the same time; and at length, utterly broken down, he was forced to resign the government of his duchy into the hands of his brother, the Duke of Lancaster, and to return to England, where he spent his few remaining years in suffering and retirement.

The French flag now waved over every city in France, with the exception of the three strongholds of Calais, Bourdeaux, and Bayonne. Charles V., elated with success, threatened to hang his mailed glove on the gates of London. Ships again collected in Harfleur and the neighbouring ports, and a fresh attempt of invasion was threatened. Again parliament assembled, and again did Wykeham set forth in simple energetic terms the needs of the country, and the duty which lay at the door of every Englishman to contribute towards the national defence. His appeal was nobly answered; both clergy and people responded to the call by an offering of no less than 100,000*l*. But in this perilous emergency the nation clamoured against the ministers, who had become unpopular through the ill success of the French war; and the parliament, seized with a momentary jealousy of the presence of so many ecclesiastics in the royal councils, petitioned the king for the summary dismissal from office of all churchmen, in order that the conduct of public affairs might be committed to laymen only. In this proceeding they were undoubtedly urged on by the Duke of Lancaster, who aimed at supreme power in the state, and had his own reasons for fearing the influence of so firm and loyal a friend of the Prince of Wales as was the Chancellor Wykeham.

The king's reply to the petition was, "that he would act by advice of his council;" and on the 24th of March the affair terminated by Wykeham's voluntary resignation of the great seal, which was immediately placed in the hands of Sir Robert Thorpe, his predecessor gracefully assisting, not only at the ceremony of his being sworn in before the king, but also at his public installation in Westminster Hall.

It was, in fact, a change of ministers brought about in a moment of national distress, when governments are ready to yield every demand to the clamour of the people. And yet in the end it proved any thing but a popular measure; for though in our day it would certainly be deemed unsuitable for ecclesiastics to fill all the chief offices of state, yet five hundred years ago few of the laity were capable of taking their place; and the removal from office of the only

body of men who possessed the knowledge and talents necessary for the task of government, caused such confusion, that, as we shall see, in the course of a few years the old plan had to be resorted to, and the churchmen were all recalled.

In fact, Wykeham, though removed from the chancellorship, retained his position as a great councillor of state, and the most confidential of the king's advisers. His resignation of office was a gain to himself and to his diocese, whose affairs he was now able to take into his own hands; and whilst the French war was continued with unchanged result, and the campaign of the Duke of Lancaster was terminated in 1374 with a truce, by the terms of which the English may almost be said to have been driven out of France, Wykeham was able to enter on that career in which his true greatness was to be made known to posterity.

But the military defence of the island was at that moment the paramount need. Such was the danger then threatening the kingdom, that even the whole body of the clergy, from sixteen to sixty, were ordered to be arrayed in arms, and made liable to military service; and in 1373, we find an order issued to the Bishop of Winchester to see that his clergy took precautions for the defence of the southern sea-coast against any French descent. A strange measure, as we should now think; but the fighting men of England were across the seas, struggling no longer for conquest, but for the bare holding of their ground.

Whilst the reign of Edward III., so splendid in its beginning, was thus closing in disaster and disgrace, Wykeham, withdrawn from the pressure of political business, at length entered on the active discharge of his pastoral duties. On his first accession to the see, he had found matters in a state of extraordinary confusion, which it needed a patient and business-like hand to unravel. His diocese was sadly depopulated by the late terrible pestilence, and every one of the episcopal houses and buildings presented an appearance of utter dilapidation. Some were ruinous and in decay, and others had actually fallen to the ground. The churches of the diocese were not in much better repair than its episcopal residences, and the rebuilding of the cathedral nave was only just commenced. If the new

Bishop intended to reside among his people, it was quite evident that his first care must be to provide himself with a house to live in; and he did not long leave his intentions on this subject in any doubt, but at once set about the repair of his palaces. The Bishops of Winchester were at that time possessed of a great many parks, warrens, and farms, or granges, as they were called; and they had no fewer than ten castles and manors, in which, according to the custom of the times, they resided by turns, living on the produce of their own estates. So when our readers hear of the draught-horses, sheep, and black cattle, delivered over by the executors of Edington into the hands of his successor, and of certain vexatious disputes held with the said executors concerning farm-stock and dilapidations, they must understand that these were the revenues of a Bishop of the middle ages, who, when he kept open house and lordly hospitality, fed his guests in homely fashion with his own beef and mutton. The accounts were settled between Wykeham and the executors without any action at law; and he now found himself with ample means, in the shape of 127 horses, 1556 head of cattle, and 12,174 sheep and lambs, whose value amounted to about 20,000*l.* of our money. When we understand, however, that in the repairs and new buildings which he subsequently undertook, he expended a sum equivalent, according to the same calculation, to 160,000*l.*, it must be acknowledged that his successors in the see of Winchester had no reason to complain. Neither were his poor tenants suffered to feel that their interests were forgotten by the new Bishop, whose first act was, we are told, the remission of a sum of 500*l.*, due to him by them as customs on his succession to the see.

When we contemplate Wykeham for the first time in the character of a prelate of the Church, we feel that his position was, in many respects, an extraordinary one. He had attained the age of thirty-eight before he had been ordained priest, and had become a Bishop only four years later. He had none of the traditions of the cloister or the college to help him in his new career, and his life hitherto had been one of uninterrupted activity in secular affairs,

the last preparation which appeared likely to fit him for the pastoral charge. Accustomed to think of him only as the acute, intelligent man of business, we are prepared to find his episcopal government marked with much of the same character. We expect to meet with the same diligence and activity that had already raised him from an obscure station, to find him upright and indefatigable in administering the temporal affairs of his diocese and in rectifying abuses ; but at the same time, we may perhaps naturally look for something over-hard and practical in his method of acting, and we are not prepared for those gentle and paternal virtues which adorn the episcopates of so many saintly prelates of the Church.

But the peculiarity of Wykeham's character was its versatility ; he united the most opposite qualities, and followed the most widely different pursuits. It is true, we know but little of the two-and-twenty years which elapsed from his first entrance into the king's service to his elevation to the see of Winchester,—externally they seem to have been spent in absorbing cares ; yet all this time his heart must have been full of the stedfast purpose of devoting himself to the service of God in holy orders ; and in this resolve, formed even before his appointment as surveyor of the public works at Windsor, he persevered in spite of a thousand obstacles, receiving the clerical tonsure in order to put away from him, as it were, something of the secular character, whilst he was still detained by secular engagements.

During all this time he must have led two utterly different lives ; with his hands always full of business, and his time seldom at his own command, he was outwardly living as thousands live around us, who affirm that they have no time for prayer, that devotion is a thing for priests and religious, and perfection almost impossible to be aimed at in the world. Every day we hear it said, that men who labour for their living must be content to save their souls by a bare observance of precepts. And no doubt, as a matter of fact, a busy life in the world does almost invariably dry up within us the source of prayer, and so fill our hearts with thoughts of this world's gain,

that we are often tempted to forget that there is any other world to win or lose. We say that it often does so *as a matter of fact*; but Wykeham's example is one among many which show that this is no *matter of necessity*. God's grace can defend a man from all dangers incident to his peculiar condition of life, and furnish him with the necessary aids to holiness in any state or calling. Wykeham not only remained a religious man in the midst of the world and of the court, but his religion was of a peculiarly devout and tender kind. If the monks of St. Swithin had looked with any degree of jealous mistrust on the courtly prelate who had been sent to minister among them, they must soon have been forced to acknowledge that their own cloister never produced more exalted piety than that which they beheld every day exhibited in the conduct of their Bishop.

We have already spoken of his devotion to the ever-blessed Mother of God; but there was another devotion which was most dearly cherished by Wykeham, and which is an equal indication of the singular *spirituality* of his mind,—we mean, that for the suffering souls in purgatory. It may be safely affirmed that this devotion, so unselfish and unearthly in its tendencies, carrying us beyond the grave, and making us familiar with the secrets of the unseen world, could never find a place in the heart of one who was engrossed by secular cares or the love of money. Its existence in any marked and special degree argues in the soul of its possessor a profound sense of sin, a deep compassion for the sufferings of others, and a habit of dwelling on the thoughts of death, judgment, and eternity. Moreover it is utterly opposed to any thing of that mercenary or commercial spirit which exists among men of the world, who like to see some large practical result even in matters of devotion. We pray, and are sensible of no return; we spend our money in a requiem Mass, and there is nothing but trust in God's word, and God's fidelity, to assure us that the money is not thrown away. Every *De profundis* that we say is as much an act of faith as it is an act of charity; and it has its reward. We do not speak merely of the benefit reaped by the souls of the faithful

departed; but who can measure the effect of this devotion on a man's own soul, bringing him (as it does) into communion with the world of spirits, and realising to him the worth of Christian suffering, and the awful purity of God? Our Catholic ancestors are said to have been distinguished above all other nations for their devotion towards the dead; and it harmonises with one feature in our national character, namely, that gravity and attraction to things of solemn and pathetic interest which, uncontrolled by the influence of faith, degenerates even into melancholy. Wykeham was, in a peculiar manner, susceptible to emotions of this kind: his heart was full of compassion for suffering, and the dead shared his charity with the living. Never did he offer the Holy Sacrifice for the departed without abundant tears. His reverence for the holy mysteries, and the singular devotion with which he celebrated, are often referred to by those who have written his life; one of whom, after speaking of his various charities, thus continues: "Not only did he, as we have said, offer his goods, but also his very self, as a lively sacrifice to God; and hence in the solemn celebration of Mass, and chiefly at that part where there is made a special memorial of the living and the dead, he was wont to shed many tears out of the humility of his heart, reputing himself unworthy, as he was wont to express it in speaking to his secretary, to perform such an office, or to handle the most sublime mysteries of the Church."

Among his charities we accordingly find a great many which were solely directed to the relief of the suffering souls. Wykeham's benevolence had in it one admirable feature: it was not left to be carried out after his death by his executors, but all his great acts of munificence were performed in his own lifetime. One of his first cares, after his accession to the see of Winchester, was to found a chantry in the Priory of Southwyke, near Wykeham, for the repose of the souls of his father, mother, and sister, who were buried within the priory church; and in all his after foundations provisions were made for the continual remembrance of the dead; and (ever grateful to his early friends) King Edward III., the Black Prince, and King Richard II. were

all commended to the charity of those who, as they prayed for Wykeham, were charged at the same time to pray for the souls of his benefactors.

We have said enough perhaps to show that if the new Bishop of Winchester was a man of business, he was not the less a man of prayer: let us now see how he entered on the government of that diocese which he had left twenty years before, with all his fortune to seek or make.

As we have said, his first care was to provide himself with a residence; his next, to let daylight into the confusion in which every thing had been left. Episcopal palaces were not the only things which were falling into decay in the diocese of Winchester; a great many charitable and religious institutions were in almost, if not quite, as ruinous a condition, and demanded as prompt a hand to set them in order. Wykeham's first appearance in his cathedral city spread a secret dismay in the hearts of many evil-doers. Those who, during the lifetime of the late Bishop, had taken advantage of the havoc caused by the dire pestilence which in the years 1349 and 1361 had swept its way through the diocese, to abuse their trusts and appropriate the revenues dedicated to the maintenance of religion, heard with no small discomfiture of the vigorous and energetic style in which the Bishop was said to be taking into his own hands the administration of his diocese. Even his orders to builders and workmen engaged on the repairs of his manor-houses and palaces bespoke the presence among them of a man who would do nothing by halves; and they dreaded lest that keen and searching glance should soon be directed on themselves. In fact, there was a general stir throughout the diocese: the stone-quarries of Quarre Abbey in the Isle of Wight, long disused and forgotten, were again in full operation; they were to furnish the materials for the works, of which the abbot was to be the chief surveyor. Every ecclesiastic in the island was called on to assist, under his directions, with horse and carriage; whilst the Bishop himself bore all the expense. The rebuilding of the cathedral was to be proceeded with without delay; and in all these preparations the clergy of Winchester soon found that they had to deal with one

whose intelligence and experience were only surpassed by his princely munificence of heart. Who could cavil at his wealth, when they witnessed his method of spending it? Every day a certain number of poor were fed and relieved in his palace; and it was whispered that this was but the least part of his charities, for his attendants and friends were charged in secret and private ways to find out those whose modesty would not suffer them to beg, and to relieve them in such a way as not to wound their honest pride. Nay, he loved to distribute his alms with his own hand; and would go about the city unattended, and often unrecognised, seeking out the best objects for his charity. His house was open to all; and if any had felt distrust of the upstart charity-boy whom royal favour had sent back to hold the first rank in his native city, such a feeling could not last; it crumbled to pieces before the frank hospitality with which he entertained his guests, and men were forced to admit that one of noble birth could not have borne his honours in a nobler spirit. Every one had free access to him; and every one left his presence conscious of its peculiar charm. In fact, the grace of simplicity was in all he did and said; not that rough bluntness which often assumes the name, but rather that rare and lovely quality which consists in singleness of purpose and intention, which surpasses in its attractiveness the most courtly external polish, and is the invariable indication of true greatness of mind. Wykeham's address was open and cheerful; his speech, we are specially told, was "free from all evasions;" long as he had lived among politicians, a fearless honesty and truthfulness was the only policy he had adopted as his own. But the greatest marvel remained for those who had been ready to take up Wickliff's sneer against the "kitchen and castle-building clerk." They found him to be, what the Pope's bull had designated him, "a man of letters." His own indefatigable exertions had supplied the place of university studies, and his pliant and versatile mind had acquired a variety of accomplishments which such studies alone would never have bestowed. To men exclusively versed in the scholastic and speculative sciences, there was something fresh and delightful in the

conversation of one whose mind had developed without the restrictions of system, and who had stored up information of all kinds both from books and his own observation. "His skill in architecture," says Dr. Lowth, "seems to have been only one part of that various treasure of useful knowledge which he had laid up for occasional application." The learned found him a man of science; while the devout acknowledged that for prayer, alms-deeds, and an austere and mortified life, he was a worthy successor of St. Birinus and St. Swithin. Casuists and divines found that he had the clearest and promptest method of solving the most intricate cases of conscience: and finally, the common people praised God for giving them a Bishop who Sunday after Sunday gathered them together in the cathedral nave, and taught them the precepts of the Gospel in their own plain English tongue; for Wykeham soon became famous as a sound and eloquent preacher.

In 1373, the Bishop held his first visitation, not only of the secular clergy, but also of all the monasteries and charitable institutions in the diocese; every one of which he visited in person. It may give our readers some idea of what were the provisions for the maintenance of religion in the fourteenth century, if we pass in review some of the institutions then existing in his cathedral city. The Winchester of Wykeham's time, then, was a very different place from that of our day. Its temporal prosperity was just beginning to decline; for Edward III. had destroyed its commerce by removing the wool-markets, or *staples*, as they were called, to his favourite French town of Calais; and thus the Winton merchants were all well-nigh ruined. But the seat of the second bishopric in the kingdom remained a great and noble city even in spite of the destruction of its wool trade: it contained the ashes of the great Alfred, and the relics of more than one sainted king and prelate of the Saxon race; and it contained also their noble institutions of piety. First, there was the cathedral, or "old minster," whose foundation was ascribed by many to Lucius, the first Christian king of Britain. Its monks were of the order of St. Benedict, as were also those who occupied the *new* minster, which stood on the north side

of the city, on the site where a modern bridewell has since been raised, over the graves of Alfred and St. Grimbald. The two communities lived in this close neighbourhood on very brotherly terms; and every year, on Palm Sunday, their ranks mingled together in a procession, whose precise arrangements were agreed on and settled by charter. Leaving the cathedral, with cross and banner borne before them, they passed by the castle on to St. James's church, where they made their first station. Then they came down the Romsey road, and full a hundred voices might be heard joining in the deep-toned chant that rose into the air as they proceeded slowly on through the suburb of St. Valery, where the two bodies separated, the monks of Hyde Abbey (as the new minster was likewise called) returning home, whilst those of St. Swithin's continued the procession down the High Street, and so back to the cathedral.

There was another Benedictine convent for women, founded by the widow of King Alfred, and popularly known by the name of the "Nunna Minster." A little heap of stones, in a garden occupying part of its enclosure, is all that now remains of this celebrated convent, whose last abbess, Dame Elizabeth Shelley, had the wit and spirit to keep at bay the royal plunderer, Henry VIII., for no less than four years; and actually forced him to refound the abbey after its dissolution had been decreed. Compelled to yield at last, her gallant heart never gave up hopes of the return of better days. She refused to leave Winchester; and when she died, bequeathed to the college a silver chalice, the only relic she had saved of the convent treasures, on condition of its being given back to St. Mary's Abbey when the old foundation should be restored.

This was not the only house of religious women in Winchester; in those days, as in our own, there were some who devoted themselves to active works of charity, whilst others led a life of unmixed contemplation; and in the street now called College Street there stood in Wykeham's time a building, styled, in the language of the common people, the "Sustern Spital," or the Sisters' Hospital, where a few religious women were maintained at the sole charge of the monks of St. Swithin's, and consecrated

themselves to the service of the sick poor, whom they received into their house. The sisters lived in the most absolute poverty, and, as we have every reason to believe, in the indefatigable discharge of their duties. Their house seems to have won no small portion of Wykeham's esteem, for we find it one of those specially mentioned in his will; but neither its insignificance, nor the pious charity of its inmates, secured it from the insatiable avarice of Henry VIII.; and the "Sustern Spital" was the first of the religious houses of Winchester which was suppressed at the period of the Reformation.

Besides this, there were other hospitals in the city: one had been founded by a rich citizen, named John Devenish, in the reign of Edward II., on the site of a much more ancient establishment, which had flourished under the rule of the Templars. "St. John's House" was intended "for the relief of sick and lame soldiers, poor pilgrims, and needy wayfaring men." Its chapel, together with its noble hall and cloisters, still ornament the northern side of the High Street; but we need scarcely say, neither chapel nor hospital is any longer applied to its original purpose. The charitable services of St. John's House ceased in the sixteenth century, when even the *poor beds* and squalid furniture for the sick were "confiscated to the royal use"! When Dr. Milner wrote his *History of Winchester*, the head of an image supposed to represent the holy patron was exhibited to curious visitors in the dust-hole. In Wykeham's time it probably stood over the principal entrance, looking into the High Street.

Each of the four mendicant orders had a house in Winchester or its immediate suburbs: that of the Austin Friars stood just outside the South Gate, on the Southampton road; to the east were the Carmelites, also without the walls; but the convents of the Franciscans and Dominicans stood within the city, the latter close to the East Gate, with its gardens stretching down to the banks of the river. Then there was a congregation of regular clergy, called "the Brethren of St. Peter," whose church, dedicated to St. Maurice, still stands, with remains of Saxon architecture to bear witness to its antiquity; and there was the College of St. Eliza-

beth of Hungary, pleasantly situated in the meadows near Wolvesey Palace, and intended for young clerks and students, who were to lead a simple austere life "remote from laymen." The College of the Holy Trinity was endowed as the "carnarie," or charnel-house, of the city; and the chief duties of the priests belonging to the chantry attached to it, were to bury the dead, and keep up perpetual Masses for the souls of the departed.

About a mile from the city, on the beautiful downy hill to which it gave its name, stood the Hospital of St. Mary Magdalen, ancient even in the time of Wykeham, who took infinite pains in restoring and reforming it. It is thought to have been founded by Richard Toclyve, a former Bishop of Winchester, in atonement for the part he had taken in the persecution of St. Thomas of Canterbury. It was what we should now call a hospital for incurables, and was under the patronage of the Bishop.

Besides these establishments, there were twenty-seven parish-churches and chapels in Winchester; so that, from the neighbouring heights of St. Giles's or St. Catherine's hills, the city presented a spectacle of marvellous beauty, with its white towers and spires gleaming against the green woods and downs that stretched beyond the walls. Truly these were times when the cities of England bore the impress of the creed of those who reared them; and their streets were filled, not alone with the haunts of traffic or of pleasure, but with many a precious monument of the Christian faith. On the high hill occupied by St. John's Street, the pilgrims to St. Swithin's shrine might then have paused and knelt before the large Calvary erected on that spot, because from its elevation it was visible from most parts of the city; and their road from thence to the minster would have wound past the venerable walls of many a church and hospital, the images of whose patron saints looked down from their fretted niches upon the passers-by; whilst inscriptions met the eye, suggesting at every step some holy invocation, or, it may be, some brief suffrage for the dead.

Nevertheless even holy things are liable to decay and ruin from other causes besides the spoiler's hands; and many

of the religious foundations of Winchester were in urgent need of such a visitor as Wykeham. As we have said, he "actually and personally" visited them all during the course of the year 1373; and the next year he sent his commissioners to correct and reform the abuses which he had discovered. The religious houses of his diocese he subsequently visited again three several times, and in the injunctions which he issued on these occasions he displayed the most accurate knowledge of their various rules and constitutions, the observance of which he every where strictly enforced. Many of these injunctions are still extant; amongst others those addressed to the Priory of Austin Canons at Selborne. They bear evidence both of the extraordinary patience with which he must have investigated the state of the convent, and of his perfect comprehension of the rules of monastic discipline. He specially condemns the neglect in which he found their church and altar, and says that their dirty surplices and uncleared altar-plate "caused him horror:" indeed, he ever manifested a scrupulous jealousy for the glory of God's house; for, as he observes in these same injunctions, he deemed it preposterous to show in the care of sacred things such neglect of common decency as would disgrace a profane assembly. But little of such reverential respect for holy things could be expected from men who had almost entirely laid aside their religious character, and even their religious dress. Their choir was deserted, and the recitation of the canonical hours neglected. A sporting taste had sprung up among them, if we may judge by the various allusions to their hounds and their attendance at public hunting-matches; and they had exchanged the white serge and surplice enjoined by their rule for "garments edged with costly furs," for fringed gloves, and silken girdles trimmed with gold and silver;" and (*horribile dictu!*) had completed their costume by adding the enormity of certain *boots*, the wearers of which were denounced with great severity, and threatened with imprisonment if the obnoxious boots were not forthwith laid aside. Yet, severe as Wykeham appears in these articles of visitation (and it must be admitted that his severity was not uncalled for), even the hunting canons

of Selborne were forced to own that they had found in him a lenient father and most generous benefactor. To help them in the work of reform, he discharged all the debts which their hunting-matches and costly furs had entailed upon them, to the amount of 110 marks, and a few years before he died he made them a present of another 100 marks; so that altogether they received from his private bounty about 1700*l.* of our money. But neither his severity nor his generosity sufficed to stay the onward course of relaxation; and in the reign of Henry VI., after many unavailing efforts on the part of Bishop Waynflete to introduce a better spirit, the Convent of Selborne was at last dissolved.

But Wykeham's labours at the reformation of Selborne Priory sink into insignificance compared to the herculean task which awaited him in the visitation of the hospital of St. Cross. No charitable institution in England has ever attained to greater celebrity than this, both on account of the munificent spirit in which it was founded, and the abuses and corruptions with which its revenues have been administered down even to our own day. A peculiar interest also attaches to St. Cross from the fact of its being well-nigh the solitary institution of the kind which has survived the period of dissolution and pillage: it stands almost unaltered in external appearance, to show us what were the houses of charity with which our forefathers supplied the want of union workhouses. "The lofty tower," says Dr. Milner, "the retired ambulatory, the separate cells, the common refectory, the venerable church, the black flowing dress and silver cross worn by the inmates, the conventual appellation of *brother* with which they salute one another, the silence and the order which reign here, recall the idea of a monastery." And yet St. Cross never was a monastery; it was but a house for poor infirm men living together in a regular and devout manner; "of which sort," says the same writer, "there was formerly an incredible number in the kingdom." Its conventual aspect results from the fact of its having been founded in days when the monastic spirit was in full vigour, and by men who had deeply imbibed the principles on which

that spirit rests. But during the government of Bishop Edington and some of his predecessors, the mastership of the Hospital had come to be looked on as an ecclesiastical sinecure; the rich revenues were alienated from their charitable purposes, and John d'Edington, the last master, had, on his resignation of his office, carried away with him all the stock, goods, and movable furniture in the house and on the whole estate, leaving dilapidations chargeable to his account estimated at between three and four hundred pounds.

Wykeham was no sooner in possession of his bishopric than he resolved to rectify these abuses. We shall not weary our readers with the steps he took for this purpose; it suffices to say, that they occupied a space of six years, during which time the Bishop's unflinching perseverance pursued the case through all the mazes of commissions and appeals, and finally obtained a complete triumph. When the courts, both of London and Rome, had at length pronounced judgment in his favour, he found himself still burdened with the task of restoring the Hospital from its state of decay to the original object of its institution. Roger Cloune, the master who had resisted his visitation, had imitated the example set him by D'Edington; not only had he seized all the revenues and stock, and sold the corn and cattle, but he had even conceived the idea of pulling down the Hospital itself, and selling the materials, and had actually begun with the demolition of the larder! The hundred poor men daily fed in the great refectory, called the "Hundrede Mennes Halle," had been turned away, and the hall itself had fallen in; even the thirteen poor brethren, for whom the house had been originally founded, were driven out, and forced to shift for themselves.

There was, therefore, plenty of exercise for the munificence of the Bishop; and so perfectly did he accomplish the work of restoration, that when his successor, Cardinal Beaufort, was desirous of disposing of his wealth in some charitable endowment, he preferred enlarging the charities of St. Cross to making any fresh foundation of his own. He therefore added thirty-five to the original thirteen brethren, and provided funds for the maintenance of three

religious sisters to serve the sick in the Hospital;* giving his new establishment the name of "the Almshouse of Noble Poverty." Wykeham and Beaufort may, indeed, be looked on in the light of second founders; for Beaufort's magnificent endowments would never have been made, had not the Hospital been first brought back to its original perfection through the labours of his predecessor.

Two other hospitals in his diocese were similarly visited by the indefatigable prelate, — that of St. Thomas, Southwark, and one at Sandon in Surrey; but in neither of them did he meet with any resistance to his authority.

In the course of these visitations, the plan which had, as it would seem, long before occurred to him, of making some better provision for the education of the clergy, became more clearly developed to his mind. He had already determined to make God the heir of his wealth, by consecrating it in some way or other to His service; and every day furnished him with fresh grounds of conviction that there could be no charity more greatly needed than the one to which we have referred. It is not to be doubted that the great body of the English clergy were, at the time of which we speak, greatly deficient in the learning which their state required, and, moreover, that the existing means of education were wholly inadequate for supplying their defects. But, whilst granting the fact, it is only candid to state the real cause of those evils, which Protestant writers do not scruple to attribute to the sloth and corruption of the ecclesiastical body.

At the opening of the fourteenth century, every thing had seemed to promise a great revival of literature. "The enthusiasm of learning," says one writer, "seemed to have succeeded to the enthusiasm of the Crusades." Universities sprang up every where with astonishing rapidity, and far exceeded in number those existing in our own day. The age of Dante and Petrarch cannot be branded with the reproach of being illiterate; and the Church of the fourteenth century was rejoicing in that flood of light which her greatest doctor, the angelic St. Thomas, had shed upon

* The apartments occupied by these hospital-sisters are to this day called "the nuns' rooms."

the science of theology. The schools of the mendicant orders were infusing new life and spirit into every branch of study. It is part of our modern English tradition to represent these orders as only embroiling the universities with their fantastic school disputations; but the name of Roger Bacon of itself might suggest how much they really did to extend the range of studies to many subjects hitherto utterly neglected. It is an undisputed fact, that the revived cultivation of the biblical and oriental languages is mainly attributable to their exertions; and already their labours had been attended with such success, that professorships of Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldaic had been established at Oxford by authority of Pope Clement V.

And yet, in spite of all this, there was beyond all doubt a great amount of ignorance among the clergy at the close of this century. This fact, however perplexing it may at first sight appear, is easily explained when we consider the circumstances of the times. Not England only, but the whole world, had been exposed to a series of providential visitations such as probably have no parallel in history. The great plague of 1349 had ravaged every part of Christendom, with a fury which renders the accounts handed down to us almost fabulous in their horrors. Whole towns and villages were depopulated, and wild animals roamed through their deserted streets. Immense tracts of country remained without an inhabitant; and in Asia, whence the disease originally proceeded, no less than 35,000,000 men are said to have perished. In England, one-half of the population, and *nine-tenths* of the clergy, were swept away. Five times did the terrible scourge return, each time with redoubled fury; and each time it was followed by famines no less destructive in their effects. The history of every religious institute bears witness to the devoted energy with which the clergy, both secular and regular, devoted themselves to the service of the sufferers, and of the havoc which they sustained in their own ranks. In France and Italy many convents were left without a single survivor, all having fallen martyrs in the cause of charity; so in the hospital of

Sandon, of which we have spoken above, the master and ail the brethren died to a man. In the plague of 1349 the primate of England and seven Bishops were struck down within a few months of one another. Then the parish-churches became deserted, and in most places shut up; for the people feared to congregate in any numbers, and there was often no priest left to minister to them. The universities felt the full fury of the pestilence; a vast number of scholars died, and Oxford was all but abandoned. Early in the century it boasted of 30,000 scholars, and when Wykeham's college was opened their numbers were reduced to 6,000. The schools were closed altogether for a considerable length of time, and the university itself had been reduced so low that it had ceased to be regarded as a place of learning.

The result of these calamities on the ecclesiastical body will readily appear. There existed such a distressing need of men to fulfil the commonest functions of the priesthood, that no great strictness could be observed in their selection. As to choosing men of learning, it would have been a hard matter to find them at a time when the schools and universities were all closed, and when the largest proportion of those who had frequented them had perished. Most of those who presented themselves for holy orders had received no clerical and academical education at all; they were often married men, whose wives had died by pestilence; and doubtless in very many cases Wickliff was not far wrong in representing these "widower clerks," as they were termed, as being somewhat at fault over their Psalter. In like manner, we find the religious orders, alarmed at the threatened extinction of their bodies, admitting all sorts of persons to the habit, without much examination of their call to religion; whence arose that universal relaxation which reached so great a height in the following century. But, however grievous the ignorance and unfitness of the clergy may have been in their consequences, they cannot certainly be chargeable to the corruption of the Church,—they were but the inevitable result of such a crisis as that we have described; and though the ecclesiastical authorities may possibly be blamed as imprudent

in promoting men to sacred offices for which they were wholly unqualified, it is hard to say what may not have been forced on them by the necessity of the times. Most certainly, with the parish-churches closed for want of any to administer the Sacraments, and with nine-tenths of the clergy swept from the land, the literary attainments of the candidates for holy orders could scarcely be much considered : the want of scholarship was a light evil at the moment, when compared with the pressing want of priests ; and accordingly we find it is the *ignorance* of the clergy which is the thing most loudly complained of, and represented as a public scandal, so soon as the events which caused it had passed a little from men's minds. In fact, it was clear to the sagacious eye of Wykeham that education at that moment was the truest charity : he might, indeed, have spent his wealth in endowing hospitals and founding monasteries ; but until something was done to raise the moral and intellectual standard of those who were to administer these trusts, he could feel no assurance that the money would be well applied. Society had received a shock which threatened to plunge it back into barbarism ; and he saw clearly enough that the structure he sought to rear must be commenced from the very foundations. A vast idea gradually unfolded itself to his mind, wherein he contemplated the possibility of creating a system of moral and mental training which should commence its work in childhood, and carry it on through successive stages till it should be perfected in maturer age. The school and the college, governed in the same spirit, and aiming at the same results, already stood before his eye ; and year by year he was silently accumulating the materials of his celebrated statutes.

It is evident that his resolution must have been formed very soon after his accession to his see, for within two years from that time he began to make purchases of land in Oxford for the site of the proposed college. But colleges are **not** erected in a day ; and foreseeing the length of time which must elapse before the plan could be digested and brought to perfection, and before all the royal patents and papal bulls involved in such foundations could be procured

he determined, in order not to lose time, to begin in an unpretending way, by opening a school at Winchester for the instruction of poor scholars, at his own expense. A house was therefore procured, and a master provided; and in 1373 Richard de Herton opened this school, the nursery of St. Mary's, Winton; having "covenanted diligently for the space of ten years to instruct in grammatical learning as many poor scholars, and no more, as the Bishop should send him." The annual number of scholars thus maintained by Wykeham was no less than seventy.

Meanwhile great changes were passing over the English court; and Wykeham could not watch them with indifference, for death was busy among those who had been his surest friends and patrons. In 1369 he had assisted at the last moments of the good Queen Philippa,—“that excellent lady,” as Froissart calls her, “who had such boundless charity for all mankind. It was a heavy case, and a common,” he says, speaking of her death; “howbeit it was right piteous for the king, his children, and all the realm.” Wykeham received her dying confession, and soothed her passage into eternity; it was a holy Christian deathbed, in harmony with what her life had been. Having comforted the king, and charged him to do justice on all who had any claim upon her, “the good lady,” continues the historian, “made the sign of the Cross upon her breast, and having recommended to God the king and her sons, she gave up her spirit, which I firmly believe was caught by the holy angels and carried up to the glory of heaven; for she had never done any thing by thought or deed that could endanger her losing it.” With her died also the greatness and the fame of Edward III. His bodily frame was worn out by the fatigues he had undergone in his youth, and now the energies of his mind also were giving way. He had the grief, moreover, of seeing his noble son dying by a slow and premature decay, and of knowing that the sceptre he had wielded with so firm a grasp would pass after his death into the holding of a child. Broken down with sorrow and infirmity, he suffered himself during his remaining years to be governed by the menials who surrounded him, and specially by one woman, who had

been in the household of the late queen, and who now exercised unlimited power in the name of the half childish monarch. This person, whose name was Alice Piers, soon became the object of general execration by her infamous transactions. She sold the offices of state to the highest bidder, and no one could stand a chance of obtaining a hearing for his suit who had not first purchased her favour at a sufficiently costly price. There was one man, however, who did not scruple, for his own ends, to pay his court to her; and this was the Duke of Lancaster, who, in the infirm state of both the king and the Prince of Wales, had managed to get the administration of public affairs into his own hands. The popular feeling was, that he aimed at nothing short of the crown, and that he already calculated on the possibility of putting aside the claims of the Black Prince's infant heir. Perhaps the prince himself shared in these suspicions; and this may have had its influence in inducing him to give his support to the opposition which was gradually forming against the duke's government.

In 1376 a parliament assembled, long known in England by the name of the "good parliament." Acting under the countenance of the Prince of Wales, its members proceeded to institute vigorous measures of reform. Petitions were presented to the king, representing the scandals chiefly complained of; and the royal consent having been obtained to the appointment of a council of lords and prelates, they at once boldly impeached all the chief members of the Lancaster government, though, from respect to his rank, they did not venture to attack the duke himself. All his friends and confidants were, however, removed from office; Alice Piers was banished, and a particular statute passed with regard to the interference of women in the courts of law; and all the grave abuses which had so long disgraced the English court were corrected and removed. The chief mover in these measures of reform was Sir Peter de la Mare, the Speaker of the House of Commons, a personal friend of the prince, and a man of great spirit and energy. But it is clear that Wykeham also gave his open and active support to measures which commanded all his sympathy.

He was one of the nine nobles and prelates to whom the government was now committed, and was universally regarded as a close adherent of the popular party.

The career of the "good parliament" was, however, of short duration; it terminated with the life of the Prince of Wales. Sickness and disappointment had cast a gloom over his latter years; and now he lay dying in the palace of Westminster, with Wykeham by his bedside to minister to him in his last hour, as he had done to the queen his mother. Theirs had been a close and true friendship, as we may gather from the peculiar terms in which both the widow and the son of the Black Prince were ever wont to name the services of Wykeham. Edward's thoughts turned in his dying moments upon his son, whom he earnestly desired to see recognised as rightful heir to the crown of England: in this wish the parliament also joined; and when Richard of Bourdeaux, then not ten years old, was led from his father's death-bier to the assembled council of the nation, the commons with one voice petitioned the lords to declare him Prince of Wales, in his father's room, and heir-apparent to the throne. Their desires were ultimately granted; and whilst the great brave heart of the hero of Poitiers was laid to rest beneath the vaulted roof of Canterbury, his boyish heir was solemnly inaugurated Prince of Wales, and at the ensuing Christmas feast was set on the king's right hand, above all the other members of the royal family.

But it was now Lancaster's time to revenge himself for his late disgrace. The funeral of his brother was scarcely over, when he boldly re-assumed the power of which the parliament had stripped him. Alice Piers, also, once more seized possession of the king, who lay sick at Eltham; and soon compelled him to give his assent to every measure suggested by her or by the duke. The whole fury of the latter was directed against those who had been instrumental in his removal from office. Sir Peter de la Mare was arrested and closely imprisoned: with Wykeham it was impossible to act in the same arbitrary manner; and certain feigned accusations were therefore brought against him, charging him with mal-administration of the public revenues. These

charges were put together without the smallest regard to justice; in fact, they disprove themselves by their very enormity. Had Wykeham been guilty of one tenth part of the mal-practices of which he was accused, he would have been the most audacious of public criminals. He had made away with the ransoms of the French and Scottish kings, stripped the state treasury, set at liberty the hostages, and, finally, had been the sole cause of the loss of Ponthieu. Yet, when judgment came to be pronounced, not one of these charges was so much as examined; their absurdity was too manifest even in the eyes of those who had devised them; and, as it has been well observed, an affair which was begun as if millions were at stake, resolved itself into a dispute over 40*l*. A petty transaction in the Court of Hanaper, by which this sum had been refunded out of a certain fine, was declared irregular; and on this pretended ground the Bishop of Winchester was condemned, and writs were issued for seizing the temporalities of his see. At the same time, he was forbidden to approach within twenty miles of the royal court; for Lancaster dreaded to the last the influence of the great prelate over the mind of the king. A fresh parliament was convened, which revoked all the acts of reform passed by the previous assembly; but the memory of the "good parliament" could not so easily be effaced from the minds of the people. They clamoured loudly for the liberation of De la Mare, and for justice to the Bishop of Winchester; and Lancaster saw that his position was by no means a secure one. It was probably with the double motive of intimidating the party of the Bishop, and also of winning the support of the Lollard sectaries, whose numbers and power were considerably on the increase, that he resolved at this juncture to give a marked token of his protection and favour to the arch-heretic Wickliff, who, after being suffered for seventeen years to spread his pestilent doctrines through the country without opposition, was now about to be brought up for examination before the Primate and the Bishop of London. At the same time, in the vain hope of establishing himself in popular favour, he caused a general pardon to be published in the king's name to all accused of any

crime; from which, however, the Bishop of Winchester was carefully excluded, the proclamation declaring, that he, and he alone, should "enjoy nothing of the said graces, grants, and pardons, and in no wise should be comprised within the same."

Meanwhile Wykeham was, perhaps for the first time in his life, passing through the trial of adversity. He bore it as calmly and tranquilly as he had ever borne success. He was forced now to depend on the hospitality of others; for the doors of his own palaces were closed against him, and we find him residing first at the priory of the Austin canons at Merton, and then at the Cistercian abbey of Waverley in Surrey. He had been summoned to re-appear before the council in the January following his condemnation, when fresh inquiries were to be instituted into his conduct. When January came, Wykeham was ready with his defence; but the council of his accusers dared not face him; and a message was sent him that the inquiry was indefinitely postponed. It is needless to add, that it was never proceeded with further.

But together with the parliament, there had likewise assembled the convocation of the clergy; and at their first meeting, their indignation at the unjust persecution of the Bishop was expressed in no measured terms. Courtenay, Bishop of London, undertook to vindicate his cause. He displayed before the eyes of the prelates a huge roll, on which was written the history of Wykeham's injuries, and concluded an eloquent address by moving that no subsidy should be granted till these injuries were redressed, and Wykeham was restored to them to give his vote, together with the other prelates. Sudbury, the Primate, a man of timid disposition, hesitated to sanction this bold measure; but his remonstrances were unheeded, and a petition was drawn up, setting forth the wrongs sustained by the Bishop of Winchester, who had been shut out of many houses in his own diocese, while his temporalities had been unjustly seized, and concluding with a declaration, that the clergy could not proceed to consider the question of the subsidy till full justice had been done to their injured colleague. At first, no answer was vouchsafed to this address; but the

convocation remained inflexible, and the Archbishop found he could get nothing done in the king's business till the Bishop of Winchester had been recalled. A messenger was therefore despatched to Waverley to summon him to take his place among the other prelates; for although, in consequence of his late condemnation, he had received no writ of summons to the parliament, yet he was able to sit in convocation, in virtue of the Archbishop's mandate. He at once set out for London, and proceeded to the chapter-house of St. Paul's, where the prelates were assembled. At his entrance, they all rose with one accord, and received him with extraordinary marks of respect; and he immediately assumed his usual position of weight and influence in the assembly.

But, beyond procuring his presence in the convocation, the remonstrances of the clergy had as yet produced no other effect than that of greatly incensing the Duke of Lancaster, particularly against Courtenay, the originator of the measure. The examination of Wickliff, which was now fixed to take place as soon as parliament should be broken up, offered him an opportunity of evincing his displeasure. We have already had occasion more than once to mention this remarkable man, and a few words may suffice to explain the position he and his followers then occupied in England. He had been born in the same year with Wykeham, but had first drawn on himself the attention of the public in 1360, when he held a divinity professorship at Oxford, and in that capacity raised a violent opposition to the mendicant orders, whose schools were established at the university. His censures were chiefly directed against their life of mendicancy, which he affirmed to be contrary to the law of the Gospel. In the violence of his irritation, he used the coarsest invectives, not only against the friars, but also against the Popes who supported them. Soon after this, having obtained the wardenship of Canterbury Hall by somewhat questionable means, he showed himself no less hostile to the monks than he had been to the friars; and, in defiance of the college charter, expelled the late warden, together with three other monks who held scholarships according to the provision of the statutes. The

matter was referred to Rome, and his conduct being proved illegal, he was deprived of his wardenship; and this decision sowed in his heart the seeds of a deadly animosity to the Holy See. He was now presented to the living of Lutterworth, but continued from time to time to deliver divinity lectures at Oxford. They consisted of little else than bitter invectives against the whole body of the clergy. With singular inconsistency, he, who had at first attracted public notice by denouncing the mendicancy of the friars, now attacked the *beneficed* clergy, and declared all Bishops and ecclesiastics who held any endowments and possessions to be "choked with the tallow of worldly goods, and consequently to be hypocrites and Antichrists." Thus the *friars* had been denounced as living contrary to the laws of the Gospel, because supported by voluntary alms; and the *secular* clergy were now condemned on the opposite grounds of accepting endowments. We find no mention of his commencing the work of reform by resigning his own living of Lutterworth; but, having proved to his own satisfaction that the whole body of beneficed clergy were traitors to God, he went on to show that it was the duty of laymen to refuse the payment of tithes, and forcibly to deprive the clergy of their possessions. He was now at the head of a party; and his followers, whilst still professing themselves the sworn enemies of the friars, affected an exterior which did not greatly differ from theirs. They adopted the title of "poor priests," went barefoot, and loudly professed their resolution to accept of no benefice, and to devote themselves to the work of preaching; a calling they pursued in every diocese, without going through the previous form of applying for the license of the Bishops, often even in direct contradiction to their commands. The sermons of these fanatical men were, as we learn from all contemporary writers, of the most inflammatory description. They appealed to the passions of a rude and ignorant population, and the fruit of their preaching was witnessed in those fearful insurrections of the commons which took place in the following reign. At length the progress of the Lollards, as these new sectaries were termed, attracted the notice of the Pope; and it

was by his orders that Wickliff was now about to appear before the ecclesiastical courts to answer the charges brought against him.

A great crowd assembled in St. Paul's church to witness the trial; but the astonishment of the spectators was universal when they beheld the accused enter the cathedral accompanied by the Duke of Lancaster, and his close partisan Percy, the earl marshal, who cleared the way before him in no very gentle manner. Thus supported, the Lollard chief boldly confronted his judges, and seemed as though he expected to overawe them. The duke haughtily desired that a chair might be brought, and bade Wickliff be seated; but the Bishop of London interfered. It was not becoming, he said, or according to custom, that a priest accused of any misdemeanour should remain seated before his ordinary. Then the smothered wrath of Lancaster broke out into passionate menaces against the courageous prelate who dared thus to oppose his will; and he threatened, if he did not hold his prating, to drag him from the church by the hair of his head. He had sorely miscalculated the temper of his audience; for scarcely had he uttered the words, when they were repeated through the church by a thousand indignant voices, and the multitude with one accord rose in defence of their Bishop. Lancaster beheld the tumult with dismay, for he saw that the tide had turned against him. Hurriedly leaving the church, he with difficulty escaped the violence of the populace, who now gathered in the streets in great numbers; and, marching to the duke's palace of the Savoy, they commenced a furious attack, which would have ended in its total destruction, had not Courtenay himself hastened to the spot and induced them to disperse. Lancaster took refuge at Kennington, in the house of the Princess of Wales, who sent two of her gentlemen to entreat the forbearance of the citizens. "Tell your noble lady," they replied, "that we will do whatsoever she desires; but let the duke know assuredly that we will have a fair trial of Sir Peter de la Mare and the Bishop of Winton."

This riot put a stop for the present to the trial of Wickliff; but it brought a speedy decision to the affairs

of Wykeham. Every one saw plainly enough that it was the defence which Courtenay had offered of his injured colleague which had earned him the enmity of the duke; and Wykeham's cause was at once adopted by the people as their own. We may certainly take this as sufficient proof of his innocence of the charges brought against him; for small as may be the discernment of an angry mob, we will venture to say that a riot in defence of a corrupt state-minister, convicted of plundering the public treasury, is an anomaly unknown in history. The fact was clear to all eyes that Wykeham's real offence had been the part he had so courageously taken in the reformation of abuses in concert with the "good parliament;" and the persecution raised against him by Lancaster did but the more identify the duke's name with those abuses, and increased the universal hatred in which he was held. He soon saw that he should be forced to yield: the people of London, in their honest zeal for the honour of their Bishops, had measured their strength with that of the great duke, and had fairly beaten him. The lay lords of the council, too, now interfered in Wykeham's behalf; and the result was, that on the 18th of June the temporalities of the see of Winchester were restored, on condition of the Bishop's undertaking to fit out certain galleys for the defence of the kingdom; the transaction being accompanied by the private extortion of a considerable sum of money for the benefit of the infamous Alice Piers.

His complete and formal restoration to favour was delayed by the death of the king, which took place only three days afterwards, on the 21st of June 1377; and Wykeham must surely have thought with a heavy heart, that but for these troubles and persecutions he would have been by his dying couch, as he had been by the deathbed of those who had gone before him. But the deathbed of King Edward was a sorrowful and lonely one, far different in all respects from that of his queen; it is one of those scenes which sometimes occur in history, the deep and awful import of which is unfelt by those who have lost the interpretation furnished by the faith. Every Catholic reader, however, knows how desolate a thing it is to hear

of one who has died without the last Sacraments ; yet this was the fate of him who in his lifetime had ranked as the mightiest monarch of Christendom. A dark shadow had rested over his latter years ; and, in a condition of comparative childishness, he had delivered himself over, with whatever of free choice yet remained to him, into the power of that miserable woman, whose evil doings had aroused the indignation of the English commons. Alice Piers had watched alone over his last hours ; we are told she purposely *kept him in ignorance* of his approaching death, lest the intelligence should rouse his dormant faculties, and so her own sordid interests might suffer by any act of penitence or reparation. On the morning of the day which was to be his last, perceiving that his hours were numbered, she drew the jewelled ring from his finger, and left him ; her care of him was ended when there was nothing more to be wrung out of him ; and the dying man was left to struggle through his death agony in sad and utter solitude. She had carefully concealed his danger from the public, and had suffered none of his friends to be admitted to his presence ; and so there was no one left in the palace of Eltham but a few domestics of inferior rank, who, as soon as she had departed, proceeded to strip the deserted rooms of every object of value, whilst not one cared to approach the chamber of the unhappy king. There, we are told, he was at last found by a poor friar, who chanced to be in the palace, and who wandered on through the desolate and empty apartments till he came to that where Edward lay. He was in his agony, yet something of life and sense remained ; and the friar had time to rouse him, and warn him of his danger, and to call on him to prepare to appear before the presence of his Judge : and as he held his rude crucifix towards him, Edward revived, a gleam of light shone in his faded eyeballs, and, stretching out his hands, he raised the crucifix to his lips ; and, pressing the friar's hand in token of his gratitude, he sank back and expired.

Never perhaps had England witnessed such an outburst of enthusiasm as that which accompanied the proclamation of his successor. In the beautiful fair-haired

boy who rode through the streets of London on the day following that which had witnessed the death of Edward, the citizens beheld the son of their favourite hero, and, as they fondly promised themselves, the inheritor of his greatness. His first public act had a graciousness about it; for whilst his grandfather was lying on his deathbed, he had received a deputation from the citizens, and promised to make their peace with the Duke of Lancaster, on the subject of the late riot. London, therefore, received its young king with demonstrations of joy and loyalty, the accounts of which read very much like fairy-tales. The streets through which he passed were spanned with triumphal arches, and ran with wine. In Cheapside a mimic castle was erected, from the towers of which angels descended and offered him golden crowns; others presented him with cups of wine, and as he drank blew towards him fragments of gold-leaf; and amid all the quaint pageants of the day, the merchants of Cheapside were universally allowed to have shown the greatest taste in devising this golden shower.

Three weeks later followed the coronation; and in the long procession which wound its way to Westminster Hall, preceding the blue silk canopy borne aloft on silver spears, and tinkling with silver bells, underneath which walked the young king, the people rejoiced to see the venerable form of their favourite prelate, who appeared in his place during the ceremonies of the day, and at the banquet with which they were concluded. In fact, almost the first act of the new reign was the formal declaration of Wykeham's innocence, and his complete restoration to favour. To satisfy the requirements of the law, this was done in the form of a *pardon*, although the king is expressly made to say in the charter, "We do not think the said Bishop to be in any ways chargeable in the sight of God with any of the matters thus by us pardoned and remitted; but do hold him to be, as to all and every one of them, wholly innocent and guiltless." His past services, and specially his fidelity, both to the king and the Black Prince, are thus warmly acknowledged: "Revolving in our mind the great and notable services performed by the Bishop of Winches-

ter to our royal grandfather, as well as the grave labours undergone by him, and the manifold expenses incurred by him in past times; and the part which the said Bishop took in the affairs of our lord and father, and the special affection and sincere love which the same our lord and father ever bore towards the said Bishop whilst he yet abode in mortal life,—. . . we therefore, for ourselves and our heirs, do totally and in perpetuity exonerate, acquit, and absolve him from all penalties.” Lord Coke says that this pardon is one of the “most large and beneficial” ever granted by letters-patent, and that it is “largely and learnedly penned.” It does not appear quite clear through whose instrumentality it was drawn up; in the charter itself it is declared to have been granted by the advice of the Duke of Lancaster, and of the other lords of council. What Lancaster’s share in the transaction may have been it is not difficult to guess; he probably foresaw that the son of the Black Prince would naturally throw himself on the support of that party which had identified itself with his father’s name, and that his own interest suggested conciliatory measures towards Wykeham, and the other members of the “good parliament;” but it is probable that the influence of the Princess of Wales, who always bore a grateful and affectionate memory of Wykeham’s fidelity to her husband, had some share in procuring for him this “large and beneficial” mark of royal favour.

It is not our purpose to enter at any length on the vexatious history of Richard’s reign. Never were the hopes of a nation doomed to more bitter disappointment; for the accession of the young king was followed by long and ruinous wars, and by domestic factions more ruinous than war itself. During the royal minority, the government of the kingdom was intrusted to a council of regency; whose proceedings, however, gave so little satisfaction, that in 1380 a commission was appointed at the request of parliament for the purpose of undertaking a complete re-adjustment of affairs. Of this commission Wykeham was a member, as well as of almost every other council and administration subsequently formed for a similar purpose. Indeed, the political parties of the day seemed agreed but

in one thing, and that was the trust they put in the Bishop of Winchester. Not a single parliament assembled during the reign of Richard II. without bestowing on him some mark of public confidence, or in one way or other bearing witness to his matchless integrity.

In 1380 broke out that terrible insurrection of the commons, which for a time plunged the country into all the horrors of revolution. It cannot be doubted that the inflammatory preaching of the Lollard sectaries had done much to sow the seeds of discontent among the people. One of the favourite doctrines of Wickliff was, that "the right to property was founded in grace;" in other words, that no man in a state of sin was capable of holding lands, or claiming the services of others; whilst the decision as to who was included in this censure was of course to be left for each individual to settle as might best suit his convenience. There was a certain priest named John Ball, already more than once excommunicated for heretical preaching, and for his gross libels against the Pope and clergy, who took up these fanatical views, and soon became the popular orator of the day. Froissart describes the proceedings of this worthy in his usual graphic style. "He was accustomed," he says, "every Sunday after Mass, as the people were coming out of church, to preach to them in the market-place, and to assemble a crowd about him, to whom he would say, 'My good friends, things cannot go on well in England, nor ever will, till every thing is in common—when there is neither vassal nor lord, and all distinctions are levelled, and when the lords shall be no more masters than we. How ill they have used us! and yet, are we not all descended from Adam and Eve? They are clothed in furs and velvets, and we are forced to wear poor cloth. They have wines and spices and fine bread; and we have nothing but rye, and must needs drink water; and yet it is our labour that enables them to maintain their pomp. We are all slaves, and we have no sovereign who will do us justice.' With such words as these did John Ball harangue the people at his village every Sunday after Mass, for the which he was much beloved by them; and they would murmur to each other as they went to the fields, or from

one village to another, 'John Ball preaches such and such things, and he speaks the truth.' "

The discontent of the people soon broke out into open rebellion; every county, from Kent to the Humber, caught the flame; and the excesses of the insurgents spread universal dismay. "Never," says Froissart, "was a country in such jeopardy as England then was." The chief fury of the tempest was felt in London, whither an immense multitude of the deluded peasantry marched under the direction of their leaders, Tyler and Straw, and, bursting into the Tower, slaughtered the Primate as he had just come from saying Mass. Sudbury probably owed his death to the excessive leniency he had shown towards the fanatic promoter of the insurrection, John Ball, who had several times been brought to trial before him, and whom he had always dismissed with no heavier punishment than a trifling imprisonment. "The Archbishop," says Froissart, "always set him at liberty, for he could not for conscience-sake have put him to death; and the moment he was out of prison he returned to his former errors. But it would have been better if he had been confined for life, or put to death, than that he should have been suffered thus to act." Sudbury's death had something of the character of a martyrdom: when the cries of the mad populace announced to him the fate that awaited him, he refused to fly, and calmly awaited their approach. They rushed into his presence, crying out, "Where is the Archbishop? Where is the thief and the traitor?" He advanced towards them with a tranquil air. "You are welcome, my children," he said; "I am the Archbishop whom you seek, but I am neither thief nor traitor." Then they seized him by his cassock, and dragged him outside the Tower-gates, where, surrounding him, they literally hacked him to pieces; he meekly extending his neck to receive their blows, and praying for them with his last breath.

For two days the streets of the capital were filled with scenes of frightful riot and bloodshed; and in this crisis, we may say that the young king himself was the only man who displayed any courage or presence of mind. To his boldness in meeting the rioters, as well as to the coolness

and moderation he showed in treating with them, the deliverance of the nation may be attributed. But even when the insurrection was quelled, the state of the kingdom remained so disturbed, that we find councils and commissions appointed one after another to inquire into the causes of discontent, and to apply a remedy. Wykeham sat in every one of them, and there is reason to regret that no record has been preserved of the part he took in their debates. That taken by the king was every way remarkable; for it evinces both a goodness of heart and a far-seeing largeness of views for which historians do not usually give him credit. He frankly proposed to parliament the emancipation of the serfs; for it must be remembered, that at the time of which we speak the state of the lower classes of England was one of bondage, and that, whatever may have been the freedom which Magna Charta secured to the barons, it left the people little better than their slaves. But Richard's proposal was any thing but agreeable to his audience; lords and commons burst out in one unanimous and indignant refusal: "Rather would they die," they said, "all in one day." Michelet affirms that this manifestation of the king's political sentiments was never forgotten by the barons, and was the real cause of his ultimate dethronement; "from that day," he says, "Richard was a doomed man."*

* Though not immediately connected with our subject, we cannot forbear directing the attention of our readers to another instance of this noble and liberal sympathy with the people displayed on the part of Richard II. It is the more remarkable, because in this case it has no parallel, being the solitary instance on record where the cause of "justice to Ireland" was advocated by an English sovereign in opposition to the whole body of lords and commons. Richard often visited Ireland, and showed a peculiar interest in every thing connected with the state of that unhappy country. On his return from one of these expeditions, he declared to his council his solemn conviction that there would never be an end to the rebellions and distractions of the island, until the rights and privileges of the English law should be extended to the Irish natives as well as to the English who held lands in Ireland. This he, for his part, desired to grant them; but the proposal, like that of giving freedom to the English serfs, was received with scorn and derision. "They would rather forfeit every hide of land," was the answer of the lords of the council; and Richard was forced to yield to their power, though, we are told, he never changed his opinions.

From all we know of Wykeham's line of policy, as well as from the close friendship which united him with the king, and which remained unbroken through the whole of Richard's subsequent disasters, we cannot but feel it more than probable that he at least was found to give his support to a proposal which we may well suppose must have commanded all his sympathies; for, amid the scanty notices left us of Wykeham's acts as a statesman, more than one allusion is made to his efforts to relieve the people's burdens.

Though the king was unable to carry his proposed scheme for the emancipation of the serfs, an opportunity was soon afforded him of at least stopping the frightful effusion of blood which followed the suppression of the insurrection. The executions of the unhappy peasantry who had taken part in the rising were being carried on without any mercy, when the marriage of Richard with Anne of Bohemia, and the subsequent coronation of the young queen, gave him a happy occasion for publishing a general pardon. This grace, which was generally supposed to have been granted at the queen's earnest request, obtained for her, in England, the title of "the good Queen Anne."

Meanwhile the progress of the Lollards was exciting the gravest apprehensions in the minds of the English prelates. Our readers may remember, that the first examination of their leader, Wickliff, had terminated in a popular tumult, and that further proceedings were in consequence suspended for a time. Nevertheless, before the end of the same year, he was again summoned to explain certain propositions selected from his works. Those who profess to see in this man the maintainer of pure primitive Christianity, and the morning star of the English Reformation, would do well really to study his conduct on this occasion. At first he assumed a bold tone, and declared himself ready to shed the last drop of his blood in defence of his doctrines; but no sooner had his trial begun, than his expressions changed. He opened his defence with a profession of entire submission to the authority of the Church, and a revocation of every thing which he might have taught contrary to the truth of Christ. Then follows his explana-

tion of the condemned propositions, which he neither maintains nor abandons, but treats according to a certain system of interpretation (not entirely unknown among heretical bodies in our own day), by which, retaining the words of his previous statements, he contrives, by quibbles, evasions, and the most extravagant distortions of sense, to give them a totally different meaning. Our readers may feel curious to see some specimens of these "non-natural" interpretations of a heretic of the fourteenth century. One of his doctrines was, that no man could hold any civil possessions as a *perpetual inheritance*, and that God Himself could not confer on any one such a right of holding possessions for ever. He now explained that by the words "for ever" he meant after the Day of Judgment, and that, therefore, this doctrine did not affect the present time; although it is notorious that, in the inflammatory sermons he was wont to address to the populace, his whole drift was to do away with all idea of the rights of property, and that the preaching of this doctrine was one main instrument used by the revolutionary leaders to excite the people to insurrection. He also asserted that, "if there was a God, temporal lords might lawfully and meritoriously take away worldly goods from a delinquent Church." The temporal possessions of the Church had, indeed, been the first object of his attack; but now he protested against being thought to teach that temporal lords had of themselves any power to proceed against the Church and seize her property: he only meant that, *if* there were a God, He was almighty and could do all things; and *if* He were almighty, it was possible He might command temporal lords at some time to seize the Church lands; and finally, that *if* He so commanded them, they might meritoriously and lawfully obey.

Our readers will probably agree with the historian* who remarks that such a course of evasion was unworthy either of a sensible or an honest man. But Wickliff was not honest. Had he been so, two courses were open to him: either to avow his propositions, and abide by his vaunted offer to die in their defence; or sincerely to make that submission to the authority of the Church which, as

* Lingard.

it proved, was nothing better in his lips than a miserable hypocrisy. But he had not sincerity enough for either of these lines of conduct. He was incapable of submission, whilst at the same time he had no intention of dying as a martyr; and so he was content to escape from the dilemma by a series of clever shifts and contrivances. The Bishops found themselves unable to condemn him, and dismissed him, therefore, with a significant charge to abstain in future from such *ambiguous* language; and Wickliff departed from the court loudly claiming the issue of the trial as a triumph for those very doctrines which it had been his one aim, during his defence, to explain away. We may question the wisdom of this act of leniency on the part of the Bishops, but it may suffice to show how slowly the Church was moved to that severity towards the Lollards which was forced on her at a later period by their own excesses.

Some writers, however, have affirmed that their moderation is rather to be attributed to timidity, and to the influence exerted over them by the court. It is certain that the Princess of Wales did interfere on behalf of Wickliff, to whose opinions she was supposed to lean; and she is said to have induced the Queen, Anne of Bohemia, to obtain his dismissal from her royal consort. Even if this statement be correct, it would be evidently no ground for representing the Bishops as intimidated into mercy; for their fear of the royal displeasure was not powerful enough to restrain them from resuming the proceedings against Wickliff very shortly afterwards, when, as we shall see, they instituted a minute and rigorous examination of all his doctrines. If Queen Anne did really intercede on his behalf, the probability is, that she acted rather from the same benevolence which induced her to undertake the cause of the rioters, than from any sympathy with the teaching of the Lollard chief. There is abundant evidence that Richard himself, when most under the influence of Anne, was strongly opposed to the new opinions. Thus, in his address to the mayor and citizens of London, in 1392, on occasion of a recent riot, he expresses himself in the following terms: "Henceforth avoid offence to your sovereign, and disrespect to his nobles. Preserve the

ancient faith; despise the new doctrines, unknown to your fathers; defend the Catholic Church, the whole Church, for there is no order of men in it that is not dedicated to the service of God." But, we may ask, is there not a strange inconsistency, or, were it not truer to say, a strange malignity, in the way in which heresy represents the action of the Church? When she is forced into severity, there are no words too terrible in which to paint her thirst for heretical blood; but, marvellous to say, her *leniency*, on the other hand, is received only with expressions of contempt: she is cruel when she punishes,—she is cowardly and mean-spirited when she forgives.

It is probable that the explanation of the gentleness with which Wickliff was treated at this trial must be found in the extreme mildness of the primate Sudbury, of whose subsequent death we have already spoken. He was succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Courtenay, Bishop of London, the same who had already taken so decided a part against the new opinions, and who had offered so courageous a defence of Wykeham during the period of his disgrace. Almost his first act on succeeding to the primacy was to call a synod for the purpose of adopting measures for the extinction of this alarming heresy. The events that had occurred since the last trial seemed to demand some more vigorous line of policy; for, let it be observed, Wickliffism was no mere system of opinions, it contained principles of social revolution, and ever acted on the aggressive. During the confusion consequent upon the insurrection of the commons, Wickliff, moreover, had taken occasion to direct his "poor priests," now an organised body acting under his command, to attack the doctrines as well as the discipline of the Church; and four-and-twenty heretical propositions were now selected from his works, and laid before the synod which assembled at the convent of the Blackfriars in London early in the year 1382. At this synod Wykeham attended, and was, next to the Archbishop, the principal person there. After a careful examination by the members of the synod,—“all of them” (in the language of Dr. Lowth) “persons the most eminent for their skill and learning, and their

soundness in religion,"—these propositions were all condemned; Wickliff then appealed to the protection of the Duke of Lancaster, who, however, rejected his application with contempt; and judgment was pronounced against him, to the effect that he should be suspended from the office of preaching at Oxford, and that all his works should be seized and forwarded to the Archbishop *without erasure or alteration*—a clause rendered necessary by his continual evasions and insincerities. The mandate of suspension was forwarded to Oxford, where it was received with much opposition. Dr. Philip Repingdon, one of the boldest of Wickliff's supporters, even announced his intention of publicly maintaining the condemned propositions in the university pulpit, in which he was supported by the chancellor, Dr. Rygge, who resented the interference of the Archbishop as an attack on the rights of the university. For this the chancellor was himself summoned to appear before the synod, and there humbly made his submission, on which, we are told that Wykeham strenuously interceded for him, and obtained his pardon; for, with his usual far-seeing wisdom, he was averse to all undue severity which could tend to irritate the feelings of the disaffected clergy; thus winning for himself the double merit of zeal in defence of the Catholic doctrines,* and a willingness to win and conciliate those who opposed themselves to her authority, rather than to drive them into open separation.

Again, we find the clemency of the Catholic prelates attributed by Protestant historians to their fear of the Duke of Lancaster, but with what truth may be gathered from the fact, that the duke had, as we have seen, refused his countenance to the heresiarch, whose two disciples, Repingdon and Hireford, seem to have been so thoroughly persuaded that there was nothing to be expected from court favour to their cause, that, clamorous as had been their former professions, they now, after repeated evasions, publicly recanted, and from that time forth were conspicuous for their rancorous persecution of the opinions they had

* His name appears next to that of the primate in the signatures appended to the condemnation of the Lollard doctrines.

once held. In fact, the reluctant submission which Wickliff at length made, was forced from him by the duke, who, scandalised at his appeal from a spiritual to a lay tribunal, hastened from Oxford to induce him to discontinue his resistance.* He accordingly read his confession of the Catholic faith before the assembled prelates, and was then suffered to retire to his rectory of Lutterworth, where he remained unmolested till the day of his death. It took place two years after his condemnation; at the moment of elevating the Sacred Host he was struck with apoplexy, and expired, on the feast of the Holy Innocents, 1384.

Throughout the brief and imperfect notices of Wykeham's share in public events, we have seen him active in the condemnation of heresy, yet foremost in interceding for clemency towards the condemned; indeed, his position amid the contending political parties was eminently that of a peace-maker, although he knew how to rebuke with boldness and severity when occasion needed. Thus, in the year following that which had witnessed the condemnation of Wickliff, a war with Scotland being apprehended, the lords-marchers of the North were ordered by parliament to repair to their respective counties, and there to fortify and garrison their border castles. This was, in fact, the tenure on which they held their lands and dignities; but on this occasion they had the meanness to refuse their

* Wickliff, in the course of this trial, appealed to the parliament, and presented a petition, in which he was careful to instruct them in the measures necessary for them to take for the safety of the nation. In this document he artfully appeals to that national jealousy of Rome which was ever at work eating out the very sap and life of English Catholicity. Some of his expressions are worth our notice, as examples of the way in which the Lollards were wont to appeal to the sacred writings. He demands that neither the king nor the kingdom shall obey any prelate, *unless this be commanded by Scripture*; and again, that no money be sent either to Rome or Avignon (then the residence of the Pope), or to any foreign court, *unless this duty can be proved and established by Scripture!* A use of biblical authority much in keeping with the representation of his followers in that celebrated petition which they presented to parliament a few years later, in which, among other crimes of the clergy, they set forth their having "permitted men to exercise the trades of the goldsmith and sword-cutler, *which are unnecessary and pernicious under the Gospel dispensation!*"

feudal service, unless they received a share of the subsidy which had been raised on the already over-taxed people for the national defences. These lords-marchers were some of the most powerful nobles of the land; among them was Lancaster's friend and partisan Percy; and when the question came to be debated in parliament, there appeared no small chance of their gaining their point. But Wykeham opposed their petition with firmness and dignity: he was not one to be overborne by rank or influence, when the claim urged was both unjust and oppressive. He reminded them of the fact, that all their wealth and honours had been granted them on the express condition of their yielding their country that service for which they now basely demanded payment; and he drew a forcible contrast between their selfishness and want of patriotism and the chivalry of their brave ancestors. The earl-marshal must have felt a blush of shame mantle on his cheek as he listened to the Bishop's lofty and indignant address. His castle of Warkworth had been granted to his grandfather in the previous reign on this very tenure, and was, in fact, one of the national border defences. Wykeham convinced his hearers; and the lords-marchers, for this time at least, had to raise their forces at their own expense. The political position held by Wykeham in the midst of the various factions which struggled for supremacy during Richard's minority was not a little remarkable. He was a member of administrations formed of parties the most opposite. In 1385 we find him remonstrating with the king for his extravagant demands for additional subsidies; in the following year, when the Duke of Gloucester assumed the chief authority, and formed a grand commission,—a council for the regulation of public affairs,—Wykeham was again named a member of this new government, though, we are told, he was careful to have as little share as possible in the exercise of its powers. The complete neutrality observed by Wykeham at a time when he actually held office under the Gloucester government, is shown by his conduct towards the respective parties. On the one hand, he appears constantly remonstrating with the king for his

follies and extravagance, on the part of his colleagues; but, on the other, he would have no share in their violent and disloyal acts; and when all the king's adherents were seized, and either put to death or banished by the duke, in the exercise of his arbitrary and illegal power, and Rushbrooke, Bishop of Chichester, and the king's confessor, was among others banished and deprived of his temporalities, Wykeham fearlessly offered him an asylum in his castle of Wolvesey, and for a considerable time supported him at his own expense.

In the subsequent struggles between Gloucester and the king, Wykeham was one of those appointed to mediate between them, and at the same time to urge on the youthful sovereign the necessity of a retrenchment of his expenses; yet so little did he forfeit the confidence of the king by thus appearing on the part of the confederates, that when, in 1389, Richard, having attained his majority, succeeded in freeing himself from the bondage in which he had hitherto been kept, and in possessing himself of the supreme power, we find his first act, after displacing all the other partisans of Gloucester from office, was to offer the great seal to Wykeham. Nothing can be a greater proof of the moderation and integrity which thus gained for this remarkable man the trust both of his sovereign and of his countrymen in a period of such fierce dissensions. The Monk of Evesham tells us he did all he could to avoid the acceptance of so responsible an office; but Richard would take no denial: he desired to have him near his person, and in a manner forced him to remain at the head of affairs; while he treated all the other members of the Gloucester administration as his political enemies.

The influence of his councils was soon perceivable in the spirit with which Richard began the exercise of his royal power. "He was now his own master," says Lingard; "and whether it were owing to his wisdom or the wisdom of his ministers, it must be owned that for some years his administration was tranquil and happy." The declaration of the chancellor, in his opening speech to the parliament, seemed likely to be justified, when he said, that "the king, being of full age, was resolved to rule his

subjects in peace, equity, and justice; and that as well Holy Church as the lords and commons of the realm should have and enjoy their due liberties and franchises.' The commons were charged to see to the removal of all things that hindered the execution of the laws and oppressed the people; for that "the king willed that full right and justice should be done to the poor as well as to the rich." So soon as the tranquillity of the kingdom had been assured, Wykeham, with every one of the lately-appointed ministers, resigned their seals of office, and required that all who had any complaint to make against them should declare it to the king in parliament. The answer to this challenge was equivalent to what we should now call a vote of confidence: lords and commons unanimously declared that "all things had been very well done," and that they had deserved the thanks of parliament for their fidelity and good conduct. Hereupon they were restored to their offices, and together with them the king's two uncles, Gloucester and Lancaster, took their seat at the council-table; so that all things seemed to promise a happy restoration of peace and good government; and when the parliament broke up, it was with a public expression of thanks to the king for the zeal he had shown for his people's good.

Wykeham held the great seal but two years. He had accepted it reluctantly; and now, when, as it seemed, the troubles of the king's minority had been forgotten, and his government had been inaugurated amid the blessings of peace and restored unanimity, he again resigned his dignity; and earnestly recommending to the king a continuation of the same moderate policy, he retired to his own diocese; nor do we find him ever afterwards taking any active share in state affairs.

The tranquillity of Richard's reign disappeared with him; fresh dissensions soon broke out between the king and his subjects, and a fierce but brief struggle for power was terminated in 1399 by the deposition of the unhappy monarch. Once only was Wykeham's name brought forward in the course of these troubles; it was in 1397, when Richard, bent on ridding himself of all his enemies, im-

peached for treason the members of the old commission, or council, appointed during the government of the Duke of Gloucester; a most unworthy proceeding, considering that eight years had been suffered to pass over since the period of their holding office. Some of the lords of this commission were beheaded, and others banished; but, in a speech from the throne, Richard declared the Bishop of Winchester, with some other prelates and nobles, excepted from these measures, as being "wholly innocent of the evil intentions of their colleagues."

Wykeham, whose personal loyalty to one whom he regarded as the son and grandson of his two greatest benefactors remained constant and unshaken, could not give his sanction to the violent and illegal acts with which the king now sought to secure his power. The servile parliament which met at Shrewsbury in 1398 was not ashamed to give the sanction of law to all his proceedings. It was chiefly composed of men whose devotion to the royal cause had been gained by sharing among them the estates of the attainted nobles; but the Bishop of Winchester did not sit in that assembly, he sent his procurators to excuse his absence on account of his failing health and many infirmities. He appeared in his place, however, in the last parliament of Richard II. in 1399, and was present when that unhappy monarch solemnly resigned his crown; he likewise attended a few days later, when the lords were assembled in solemn council by command of the new king, Henry of Lancaster; but he would take no part in the vote of the 27th of October, by which the late sovereign was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. On this occasion he even refused to be present; nor did he from that time forth appear in person in any of the parliaments summoned by authority of Henry IV. The only occasion of his joining in any act of the state during that king's reign, was when the sudden apprehension of a Scottish invasion obliged Henry to summon an extraordinary council to furnish him with supplies without application to parliament. The prelates and clergy came forward with noble generosity; and the Bishop of Winchester, who refused his support to the unconstitutional act of his legitimate sovereign, and had absented

himself from every other council and assembly called by the authority of the usurper, gave his hearty and loyal assistance to the government at this crisis, when the safety and honour of his country demanded a sacrifice of all private or party feeling.

From these notices of Wykeham's career as a public minister, we cannot fail to conclude that it must have been marked by an extraordinary consistency and moderation. To be of all parties, and yet of no party; to be associated in almost every public act of one of the most distracted reigns of English history, and yet to thread his way amid all the mazes of state intrigue, following only what he deemed the cause of justice, and the maintenance of peace; to hold himself separated from the rancour and bitterness of the strife around him, and to be honoured and trusted by each successive government,—this surely is the picture of no common statesman. It argues the single eye and stedfast truthfulness of heart which looks to God only in every act of life, and bespeaks that grand and heroic integrity which was the special grace of William of Wykeham. Statesman as he was, the evasions of state policy were unknown to him. His words have been preserved in answer to one who reproached him for not assisting one of his friends in a cause he deemed unjust: "If I pleased men, I should not be the servant of God." Nor, with all his love of peace, would he even withhold a rebuke where it was deserved. When one of the fellows of his own college had preached a sermon glossing over the sins of the times, and, it may be, seeking popularity by something of a sacrifice of truth, he called him into his presence, and sternly reproached him with his human respect: "Mind you not," he said, "that in God's eyes it is assuredly a dreadful sin to praise the wicked, and to speak good of the covetous whom God abhorreth?"

Lowth remarks the fact, so seldom to be recorded of a minister of state, that at the same time that he advanced in royal favour, he grew in the esteem of the people. Indeed, close as was his personal friendship with his royal master, he was preëminently a *popular* minister; "he was ever favourable to, and beloved by, the people of the realm."

and constantly preserved them from subsidies, exactions, and other oppressions.”* This popularity was augmented by the charm of that singular openness and simplicity of manner which had distinguished him from a child. “His words were never evasive,” says the same writer; “he was easy of access, cheerful and open in conversation, and ready in his answers to all;” “moreover,” he adds, “his actions ever kept pace with his professions.”

We shall now be able to continue the far more interesting narrative of his episcopal career, and to trace the history of those great foundations of charity which have been the principal means of preserving his name for the veneration even of these latter days.

CHAPTER III.

OUR LADY'S COLLEGES.

WE have already seen that the first steps towards the foundation of his two colleges had been taken by Wykeham very shortly after his accession to his see. The purchases of ground for the building of the Oxford college were begun to be made so early as 1369; and about the same time that his preparatory grammar-school was opened at Winchester, under the mastership of Richard de Herton, a society was formed at Oxford, consisting of a warden and seventy fellows, who were called “The Poor Scholars of the Venerable Lord William, Bishop of Winchester,” for whom he provided lodging and maintenance, giving them rules and directions for their behaviour and course of studies. These preparatory establishments were formed six or seven years before the actual opening of the colleges, whilst the buildings were in course of erection, and the statutes for their government were being leisurely and thoughtfully brought to perfection; an admirable arrangement, by which, to use the words of Dr. Lowth, “the life and soul might be ready to inform and animate the body of his colleges, so soon as they could be finished, that so the whole system might be at once completed in every part.”

* Ms., Win. Coll.

In 1379, being now in possession of the ground for the site of his Oxford college, he obtained the royal license of foundation, and a Papal bull to the same effect. The charter of foundation was issued in the November of the same year; and in the following March the venerable founder laid the first stone of "St. Marie's College of Winchester, in Oxenford." It is a little curious that this designation has entirely given place to the name of New College, by which it was popularly called at the time; there is also something singular in the title itself. "St. Marie's of Winchester in Oxenford" has a kind of confusion of terms, which, however, points significantly to the devotion of the founder to a locality made sacred to his heart by a thousand early associations. The society was to consist of the warden and seventy fellows, of whom fifty were to study arts or philosophy and divinity, and twenty to be devoted to civil and canon law; besides which, there were to be ten chaplains, three inferior clerks, and sixteen choristers; making up in all a hundred members. But to form an idea of the spirit and design of the founder, we must listen to his own words, in the declaration which he prefixes to his statutes, and which he begins, "In the Name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and of the Most Glorious Virgin Mary, and of all the Saints of God." In it, after giving thanks to Him who of His goodness has granted to him the abundance of His gifts, he sets forth his purpose of founding these two colleges for poor indigent clerks and students, "to the praise, glory, and honour of His Name, and the exaltation of the Crucified, and for the defence of Mary, His most glorious Mother, for the exaltation of the Christian faith, and for the support of Holy Church, and the divine worship, and the advancement of all liberal arts and sciences."

He refers to the particular exigencies of the Church at that time, saying how sorrowfully he had beheld the decay of the clergy, now reduced to small numbers by pestilences, wars, and other miseries; and, though unable wholly to remedy the evil, had desired in part at least to alleviate it. Then, after providing for the cultivation of various

branches of learning, he ordains that the students in their different faculties shall, from time to time, hold conferences together, "that so the whole body, tending to one end, may be ever of one heart and one soul;" and that, full of divine love and fraternal charity, "they may so sweetly and fervently labour together, that, by the divine help, this our college may ever be provided with men renowned in all sciences, and may securely, firmly, and quietly remain and abide for ever in the beauty of peace." "The annexation of a college to a dependent school," says a recent writer, "the institution of college disputations external to the public exercises of the university, the contemporaneous erection of a private chapel, and the appropriation of fellowships for the encouragement of students in neglected branches of learning, are among the more prominent signs of that which must be regarded more as the creation of a new system than as the revival of a literature in its decline."

The first warden had been chosen out of Merton College; but he resigning before the completion of the college buildings, the Bishop appointed in his room his own kinsman, Nicholas Wykeham. The buildings were finished in six years; and on the 14th of April 1386, being the Saturday before Palm Sunday, the warden and fellows took possession of them, entering in solemn procession, with the cross borne before them, and singing the litanies. These buildings remain substantially entire to the present day; additions have been made, but no material part of Wykeham's work has been destroyed. It is needless to say he was his own architect; and probably the designing of his colleges and their chapels was a most welcome opportunity to him of indulging his favourite taste in the midst of more wearisome engagements. "The architecture of William of Wykeham," says Dr. Ingram, in his description of the college, "is peculiarly his own. Its characteristics are simplicity, elevation, grandeur, and stability. He built, as he always thought and acted, for posterity. His masonry is distinguished for the soundness of its materials, and the judgment displayed in their disposition." So true it is that a man's works will invariably

and undesignedly bear the impress of his own mind ; for this feature of "stability and simplicity" is precisely that most conspicuous in the character of the founder. In fact, the extreme simplicity of the architecture of New College is capable at first sight of awakening a feeling of disappointment : there is a plain modesty about the buildings intended for the use of the students which bespeaks in him who designed them a taste as far as possible removed from ostentation. Every thing like richness of ornament was reserved for the chapel ; and the difference of style observable in these two portions of the college is too distinct and significant to escape the notice of the commonest observer.

Something of that character of symbolism, which was to be found in most of the religious erections of the age, appears in the form of the whole building, which is comprehended within an aureole,—the mystic symbol of perfection. Of its beauty, as it stood during the lifetime of its founder, we can now scarcely judge, from the devastation which it has suffered at various times and from various hands ; principally, however, from those of the celebrated Robert Horne, Protestant Bishop of Winchester in the time of Queen Elizabeth, who was, in virtue of his office, visitor of New College, and in that capacity did his best to earn the title of its destroyer. This man, of whom Wood says, that he was one "who could never abide any ancient monument, acts, or deeds, that gave any light of or to godly religion," had already become notorious for the havoc he had made at Durham, as well as at the college and cathedral of Winchester ; and in his first visitation of the foundation, of which he was the professed official guardian, the records of his devastations afford us the best idea of the architectural riches which the chapel must then have possessed. We read of niches and canopies which were hewn off, and the fretted stonework filled up with plaster and whitewash ; whilst with a ruthless hand he made a wholesale and indiscriminate destruction of images, pictures, stained-glass, and other ornaments. Little did Wykeham dream of the ruin which would be made among all these monuments of his pious munificence by one

claiming to be his successor; he thought only of the chance injuries which might result from the frolics of the junior students when he wrote his sixty-third statute, in which, after enumerating "the image of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, the holy Cross with the image of the Crucified, the image of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, and many other images of saints, with a variety of sculptures, windows of ornamental glass, paintings, and abundance of other sumptuous works, to the praise, honour, and glory of God, and of His Holy Mother, all executed with skilful subtlety, and adorned with divers colours," which he had collected and placed in the chapel, he goes on to say, "We, being careful for the safety and preservation of the said images and other works, do strictly prohibit all throwing of stones and balls, or any other things, against the walls, as well as all leaping, wrestling, and other careless and inordinate playing, either in the hall or chapel, by which the aforesaid sculptures, &c. might receive any damage." The ante-chapel still retains the original windows placed there by Wykeham; and among the few images which have escaped destruction are those of our Blessed Lady, with the founder kneeling at her feet, and St. Gabriel in the act of pronouncing the angelic salutation; while within the cloister the Archangel Raphael appears,—another monument of Wykeham's favourite devotion to these blessed spirits.

The members of the college were to live together according to the regulations of the statute. They all dined together in the refectory, where strict silence was preserved while the holy Scriptures were read aloud, and where all kinds of confusion and disturbance were forbidden. Indeed, Wykeham had a particular care that his scholars should cherish good manners as well as learning: he ordains that in their conversation one with another, whether in hall or chapel, cloister or garden, they should address one another in a "modest and courtly manner;" and that, to prevent all unseemly jesting, scandals, quarrels, and excess, "which are commonly indulged after men have dined," so soon as grace had been said, and the loving cup handed round, the seniors should retire from the hall,

taking care that the younger students departed before them. Rational recreation, however, was not forbidden, or rather, it was enjoined. In winter-time a fire was to be lighted in the hall, that "after dinner and supper the scholars and fellows might make honest recreation, reading the chronicles of the kingdom, or poems, or the wonders of the world, or other things not unbefitting the seriousness of their clerical character." Stringent laws were made to restrain all excesses of dress: they were never to put on green, red, or peaked-toed boots, or any of the other fopperies which had been introduced into England by the Bohemian nobles in the train of Queen Anne. Perhaps Wykeham wrote this special anathema against the red and green boots with a lively remembrance of the Austin Canons of Selborne; and a recollection of their sporting propensities and those of the canons of Merton, whose priory he had recently visited, may have prompted him to add a prohibition against "all dogs of chase, hawks, and even ferrets." For offences of this nature the Merton brethren had been sentenced to fast for six successive holidays on "bread and ale."

We have a complete list of the books which Wykeham presented for the use of the students, including sixty-two volumes on theology and philosophy, fifty-two on medicine, fifty-three on canon-law, and thirty-seven on civil law,—no mean commencement of a college-library in those days. After his death he bequeathed to them several other books which he had been accustomed to use, among them his own Bible.*

* It is probable that the books mentioned in the following precious morsel of the report of the royal commissioners, in 1535, formed a portion of the ancient library presented by the venerable founder. The visitors were Dr. Richard Leyton and Dr. London; and it is thus they write: "At the seconde tyme we came to New Colege, affter we hade declarede your injunctions, we fownde all the gret Quadrant Court full of the leeves of Dunce" (a Protestant witticism on the name of Duns Scotus), "the wynde blowyng them into evere corner. And there we fownde one Mr. Grenefelde, a gentilman of Bukynghamshire, gatherynge up part of the saide bowke leaves (as he saide), therwith to make hym *sewells* or *blawnsherres* (*i. e.* scarecrows) to keep the dere within the woode, therby to make the better cry with his howndes."

Besides his donation of books, Wykeham supplied the college with many beautiful church-ornaments, some of which are still preserved, and bear the name of the "founder's jewels," though many of those so called were added by later benefactors. From these relics, we may gather some notion of the magnificence with which the celebration of the divine offices must have been anciently accompanied. A pax of silver-gilt may still be seen, set round with pearls, sapphires, rubies, and diamonds, as well as a beautiful jewel which appears to have formed the central ornament of a morse, representing the letter M, the stems studded with precious stones, while in the open compartments appear figures of our Lady and the Angel Gabriel; the whole being emblematic of the Annunciation. We read of no less than fifty copes having been presented to the college by one liberal benefactor, to whom the students were likewise indebted for their chapel-organ. But the most precious relics in their treasury, even before it had been stripped by the hands of puritanical plunderers, were doubtless those which had belonged to the founder himself, and which are still honourably preserved. It speaks volumes for the veneration which attached to Wykeham's memory, when we find that even such men as Horne and Leyton dared not lay their sacrilegious hands on his mitre, crosier, and other pontifical ornaments, though it must have cost them a struggle to spare what they and their fellows were wont to term these "Popish mumming garments." The ground of the mitre is entirely covered with seed pearls, mixed with jewels set in gold, and is also ornamented with emblems of the Annunciation; the pastoral staff is of silver-gilt, studded with enamels, whilst small but exquisitely-wrought tabernacles run story above story, each filled with graceful statuettes of saints. The crook terminates in a kneeling figure, probably representing the bishop himself. Besides, there are the episcopal dalmatics, gloves, and buskins, all bearing witness to the ancient faith and ritual once so dearly cherished in the colleges of our Lady of Winton.

During the building of the Oxford College, the school at Winchester was not forgotten. It was being gradually brought into shape; and the charter of foundation was

issued in 1378, when Thomas de Cranley was appointed first warden. Like its sister society, it was to consist of a hundred members: the warden and ten priests, seventy poor scholars, three chaplains, and three inferior clerks, and sixteen choristers. Harpsfield informs us that, according to the spirit of the age, a symbolical meaning was concealed under these numbers: that the warden and ten priests represented the eleven Apostles; the seventy scholars, with their two masters, the seventy-two disciples; the six clerks of the chapel, the six deacons, Nicholas the seventh deacon being omitted, like Judas, on account of his subsequent apostasy; finally, that the sixteen choristers represented the four greater and twelve minor prophets.

Some years elapsed before Wykeham was able to obtain possession of all the lands he had fixed on for the site of the college. They belonged to different owners; and scarcely had their purchase been completed, when he found himself involved in a vexatious lawsuit; a certain tailor named Devereux serving him with an action of ejectment in consequence of a pretended claim which he made to three acres of the ground in right of his wife. In the course of the suit, the tailor's claim was discovered to be not only groundless, but fraudulent, and he was condemned in costs of 200*l.*; which were immediately defrayed by his generous adversary, who, moreover, finding him some years later reduced to extreme poverty, granted him a pension for his life. There is no doubt that the present college occupies the site of the more ancient school which Wykeham attended in his youth, and that an affectionate remembrance of his own schoolboy-days determined him in the choice of the situation. He did not begin its erection till the Oxford buildings were finished; but in 1387, shortly after the opening of New College, the first stone was laid of Winchester College, which was completed in six years. It was solemnly opened on the 28th of March 1393; when the society, which had been forming under Wykeham's own eyes and directions for twenty years, solemnly took possession of its new house. The school had hitherto occupied lodgings in the parish of St. John Baptist on the Hill; and thence did the procession set forth, with cross and banner

displayed, and the sweet boyish voices intoning the solemn litanies, on that morning, which we will venture to call a memorable one in the annals of England. A great work was begun that day; the foundations were laid of a vast and comprehensive scheme of education, which has been the model and guide for every founder of similar institutions in later times. The union of the University College and its dependent school and nursery was imitated by Henry VI. in his colleges of Eton and King's; by Wolsey in his foundation of Cardinal College* and Ipswich School; by Sir Thomas White, the founder of St. John's and the Merchant Taylors' School; and even by Queen Elizabeth, who thus connected Christ Church with Westminster School; although the entire plan was never fully carried out, except at Winchester and Eton.

"Wykeham's design," says Dr. Lowth, "was noble, uniform, and complete. It was no less than to provide for the perpetual maintenance and instruction of two hundred scholars, to afford them a liberal support, and to lead them through a perfect course of education,—from the first elements of letters through the whole circle of the sciences, from the lowest class of grammatical learning to the highest degrees in the several faculties." We have already glanced at the foundation at the University; but perhaps the school at Winchester claims even more of our interest and attention. If we are not mistaken, it was the favourite foundation of the venerable father: he calls it, in his statutes, "the origin and source of our college at Oxford, which, like a watered garden, or a vine putting forth its young buds, should provide flowers and fruits of sweet savour in the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, through His grace and favour." "We desire," he says, "that in this our College of Winton may be found the sweet and pleasant milk of the rudiments of science, whereby tender infancy may be nourished; that so, having tasted the sweet honey of these primitive sciences, they may the more easily bear the solid food which shall make them grow to perfect strength; and, advancing to a true understanding of the mysteries of the

* So Christ Church was styled at the time of its first foundation by Wolsey.

sacred writings, may produce mature and abundant fruit in the holy Church of God."

The buildings of Winchester College are very similar in their general character to those at Oxford; there is the same simplicity, harmony, and grandeur of design. Here, as at New College, on the gateway, and again repeated in more than one canopied niche, still appears the form of her to whose honour Wykeham dedicated his work. The images of the Blessed Virgin which he erected have escaped destruction when almost every other holy statue fell under the iconoclastic fury of the reformers; and this is the more singular, from the fact of their occupying most conspicuous situations: one, representing our Lady with crown and sceptre, and holding the Divine Child in her arms, standing on the outside of the gateway, exposed to the open street, has remained untouched, while the crown and mitre of the two adjoining figures of Edward III. and the founder have been carefully defaced. The middle tower over the interior gate has three beautiful niches, in the centre one of which stands our Lady again, as large as life, with St. Gabriel on the right side, and Wykeham, kneeling as a votary, on the left, dressed in his episcopal vestments. The very same figures are repeated on the south side of this tower; whilst over the east end of the church appears another crowned image of the Queen of Heaven under a gorgeous canopy. Wykeham was determined that his loyal love of Mary should at least be no doubtful question to posterity; and his Protestant biographer has noticed this his special devotion in terms which do credit to his own moderation of feeling. "He seems even in childhood," says Dr. Lowth, "to have chosen the Blessed Virgin as his peculiar patroness, to have placed himself under her protection, and, in a manner, to have dedicated himself to her service; and probably he might ever after consider himself as indebted to her special favour for the various successes with which he was blessed through life. This seems to have been the reason of his dedicating to her his two colleges, and calling them by her name; over all the principal gates of which he has been careful to have himself represented, as her votary, in act of adoration to

the Blessed Virgin, as his and their common guardian." We have noticed at Oxford the images still remaining of St. Gabriel and St. Raphael; here, over the western extremity of the hall, appears the figure of St. Michael, armed with spear and shield, transfixing the old dragon.

The college-buildings had something of a conventual arrangement, in harmony with the rule of life enjoined by the statutes. Whilst yet resident in their lodgings on St. Giles's Hill, the society was obliged by the founder to attend the parish-church of St. John's on every Sunday and festival, and there to assist at matins, vespers, compline, and the hours and Masses of the day, and to take their part in saying and singing the divine office. So soon as they had a chapel of their own, the daily singing of the divine office was ordered to be performed by the fellows and chaplains, "with chant and note." Pitt tells us that all the members of the college assisted at the early matins of our Lady. Seven Masses were commanded to be sung every day,—the first for the Bishop of the diocese, the king, the Catholic Church, the souls of the founder's parents, and of all the faithful departed; the second for the souls of King Edward III., Queen Philippa, the Black Prince, Richard II., Queen Anne, and the founder, with certain benefactors; the third Mass was to be of the day. All were to be sung at the high altar "with note and chant." The grateful love of Wykeham to his royal friends and patrons is evinced in a thousand ways. Besides the Masses for their souls, he seems to have wished to provide means for constantly bringing them to the memory of his scholars: he has introduced their figures into the superb east window of the chapel,—and not theirs only, but those of humbler friends; for there, besides innumerable figures of the saints of the old and new law, we see that of the founder himself, kneeling as usual at the feet of Mary; of Richard II. addressing himself in prayer to St. John the Baptist; of Edward III. adoring the Holy Trinity; and of the glass-painter, stone-mason, clerk of the works, and carpenter, employed on the building,—all at their devotions. In another window was a representation of Wykeham's consecration.

The chapel is approached through a low ambulatory, where the scholars were to say their private prayers between the ringing of the first and second bells; in the ante-chapel the citizens were admitted to assist at the services. The chapel itself is acknowledged by all to be one of Wykeham's masterpieces. The fair tracery of the vaulted roof was an architectural novelty of his own design, which later architects imitated in stone. Two altars formerly stood at the west side of the rood-screen, beside the high altar, and were probably dedicated to our Lady and the Blessed Sacrament. An exquisite stone reredos rose behind the high altar, remains of which peep above the modern wainscot, of a Grecian design, which now runs round the chapel. A tabernacle of solid gold was presented by King Henry VI., with chalices and other vessels of the same material; the stalls were richly carved and crested with tabernacle work. Their place is now filled with common wooden benches, and their remains have been removed into the ante-chapel. A beautiful set of vestments was presented by the founder to the college, the list of which is still preserved, with an immense quantity of gold and silver plate and jewels. Five bells still hang in the tower, which anciently stood over a chantry; but at the Reformation, when chantries were abolished as superstitious, certain alterations were made, which have resulted in something which the symbolising architects of the middle ages would have deemed significant: the tower has been so undermined and weakened, that no one can now venture to ring the bells. It is as though they were reluctant to call men to other offices than those of Holy Church. The refectory and ancient lavatory remain unaltered in form; the former is considered the noblest collegiate hall in England. Here, as at Oxford, the Bible, or some other holy book, was appointed to be read aloud during dinner. As in all Catholic institutes, the grace at dinner included prayers for the dead, which have of course been disused since the Reformation: yet it is singular to find an old Catholic hymn, *Jam Lucis orto sidere*, substituted during Easter-time for the *De profundis*. This hymn is also still sung in procession on the mornings of "breaking up" in the cloisters,

which in old times were wont to echo with the familiar anthems of our Lady; for, if we may judge from the express prohibition against such chants enforced by the commissioners of King Edward VI., the scholars seem to have inherited much of their founder's devotion. "Let the scholars and children," say these reverend visitors, "henceforth omit to sing or say *Stella Cœli*, or *Salve Regina*, or any such-like untrue or superstitious anthem."

Very minute directions are given in the statutes for the internal arrangements of the house: the sleeping apartments were distributed and assigned in obedience to fixed laws; and the strictest regulations were in force for the maintenance not merely of good discipline, but of a gentle and Christian courtesy. Wykeham thought nothing too little to be noticed in order to secure the tone of grave and simple modesty which he desired to see adopted in his colleges. At Oxford he had severely prohibited the rude rough jesting for which the Oxford students of that period had become somewhat notorious; and had bidden them eschew a certain "most vile and horrible game of the shaving of the beard," which was a kind of practical joke wont to be exercised on each newly-made Master of Arts. At Winchester he showed himself equally anxious to preserve among the younger students a feeling of reverence for one another, and to discountenance every thing rude and disorderly. Thus those who dwelt in the upper chambers were forbidden to throw any "chattels" out of the windows, whereby others could be hurt, or any way annoyed. His 44th statute enjoins the golden rule of mutual charity, without respect of person, grade, or condition of life. Every member of the society, after the age of sixteen, was to receive the tonsure; for Wykeham's foundation, it must be always remembered, was primarily intended as an ecclesiastical seminary. How solemn are the terms in which he exhorts them to the courtesy and modesty becoming their state! "We will and ordain, and command it to be firmly observed, and in the bowels of Jesus Christ we beseech also and pray all the fellows and scholars, and all other persons in this college, on their hope to obtain happiness in this life and in life eternal, and on

their fear of the Divine judgments, that in all, and above all, they ever preserve among themselves charity, peace, concord, and brotherly love; and that to this end they avoid all scurrility and angry, contumelious, insulting, injurious, or derisive words, as well as all that are scandalous or offensive; and all comparisons of rank or station, all disputes concerning special rights and prerogatives, and all other things which may excite contention." Modesty, too, was to be observed in their dress; and not only modesty, but frugality. There were to be no "peaked-toed boots" or "knotted hoods," no "pied garments" of many and variegated colours; but grave robes of black or russet, which were expected to remain in use for five years at the least, and to be carefully kept in repair. In fact, Wykeham's ideal of courteous and noble manners included something of that plain and unaffected simplicity which was so admirable in himself. He wished to make his scholars gentlemen, but was far from desiring to see them *fine* gentlemen. He enjoined many of the old monastic customs to be observed; among others, obliging every scholar to sweep his own room, and make his own bed. As late as the sixteenth century, the beds consisted of bundles of straw; so possibly the process of making them was simple enough. However, it is curious to observe that this rule, natural and becoming as it seems to those accustomed to the Catholic standard of good manners, inspired horror and even disgust in the minds of those who had lost the principle of humility on which that standard is based, and had adopted in its room that conventional system which knows not how to distinguish a humiliation from a disgrace. When the Protestant Bishop of Winchester, Sir Jonathan Trelawny, held his visitation of the college in 1708, this custom was the only thing he found to condemn; and condemn it he did, and that not exactly in the *modus curialis* which Wykeham recommended to his boys. He desires that the children be relieved at once "*from the servile and foul office of making their own beds and keeping their chambers clean,*" trusting he may be spared the formality of sending a solemn injunction to that purpose. Such was the difference between the definition of a gentleman in the

fourteenth and the eighteenth centuries. The scholars rose at five; and after performing the obnoxious office of making their straw-beds, they were expected to say their morning-prayers by themselves, consisting of portions selected from the Psalter and Breviary; at half-past five the bell called them to chapel.

It must be remembered, that Wykeham was the first founder of a college in which the chapel formed part of the original design. Some of the Oxford colleges had, indeed, chapels attached to them before the erection of New College; but in no case had this been done at the time of their first foundation, or as any necessary part of the college-system. But in Wykeham's scheme the chapel, and the celebration in it of all the divine offices with special solemnity and splendour, were leading and essential ideas; he deemed that he was providing his students with the material of one half of their spiritual and moral formation when he placed them in those glorious sanctuaries, where they drank in the spirit of Christian faith and Christian worship from every object that met their gaze. The work effected by such influences can never be rightly measured: their action is silent and unperceived, yet, on young and impressible minds, most marvellous. Wykeham had felt their power on his own soul, and rightly estimated their place in any comprehensive system of education, in which the object was not merely the instilling of learning, but the guidance of the entire moral and intellectual nature into "the fullness of the stature of Christ." It would seem that the Winchester scholars did, in fact, imbibe a spirit within the walls of their college-chapel which it was not found very easy to get rid of in days when the reverence inculcated by Wykeham's 30th statute was getting out of fashion. Strype relates a story in connection with the religious changes of the sixteenth century, which appears to show that their sympathies were certainly not on the side of image-breaking. He tells us that in 1535 one Mr. William Ford was usher at Winton College. "There were then," he says, "many golden images in that church, the door whereof was directly over against the usher's chamber. One day Mr. Ford tied a long cord to the images.

linking them all in one; and being in his chamber after midnight, he plucked the cord's end, and at one pull all the golden gods came down. It wakened all men with the rush; they were amazed at the terrible noise, and also dismayed at the grievous sight. The cord being plucked hard, and cut with a twitch, lay at the church-door. At last they fell-to searching; but Mr. Ford, most suspected, was found in his bed. After this Mr. Ford had a dog's life among them; the schoolmaster, fellows, and scholars crying out, and railing at him, by supportation of their master. . . . One night, coming home, he was watched, and when he came to a blind dark corner, they laid on him with their staves." He appears to have escaped, however, with no severer penalty for his sacrilegious freak than a sound cudgelling; but he probably did not again lay his hands on the golden images of St. Mary's, Winton.

Our readers are not to imagine that the Winchester boys of Wykeham's time were expected to eschew all play, because their venerable father set his face so determinately against the *ludos incautos et inordinatos*.* The cloisters of Winton doubtless witnessed rare sport on Childermas Day, when the ceremonial of the boy-bishop was permitted by statute. Among the college-jewels, we find mention of a copper-gilded cross and staff, for the use of the right reverend prelate; and in the list of expenses are certain entries concerning festivities held on St. Nicholas's Day, and also of payments to the amount of 20*d.* to "divers men coming from Ropley on the feast of Holy Innocents, and dancing and singing in the hall before the scholars." Jugglers, too, and minstrels were sometimes admitted; and "a servant of our lord the king" arrived one memorable January morning with no less a treasure to exhibit before the eyes of the curious little collegians than a live lion! Whole days of glorious freedom in the New Forest were allowed; for the same entries make faithful mention of payments for a certain cart, which took the boys to the wood to behold the deer-hunt, of the wine which was drunk in the forest picnic, and of the substantial supper prepared in the hall against their return.

* "Rude and reckless playing."

It is remarkable to note the affection with which a Winchester scholar, even in our own day, regards not only his college, but also the memory of its founder. It is his favourite boast that he is a "Wykehamist;" and by this amiable delusion he persuades himself that he is the lawful inheritor of all those good things which Wykeham provided for the rearing up a body of Catholic clergy, for the extension of the Catholic faith, and the defence and enlargement of the Catholic Church. In his daily prayers he is made to "give hearty thanks for William of Wykeham our founder;" though the prayers which the venerable father demanded of all future generations of his sons have long ago been silenced, among the other untrue superstitions of Popery; and he joins in praising God for those benefactors, "by whose benefits we are here brought up in godliness and good learning," when but a glance at the shattered reredos would suffice to remind him that the godliness for which the founder's statutes provided was that which draws its life and being from an altar and a sacrifice which have long since been taken away.

Wykeham's work bore its fruit; and his colleges had not been long founded, before they were acknowledged to take the first rank among all the English learned institutes. One of his own scholars, whom, Dr. Lowth tells us, "he had himself seen educated in both his societies, and had raised under his own eye," was deemed worthy a few years later to be called "the golden candlestick of the English Church, the darling of the people, and the good father of the clergy." This was Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, the founder of All Souls' College at Oxford, and the faithful imitator of Wykeham in his mingled zeal and moderation, his large benevolence, and his noble love of learning.

Of William of Waynflete, the founder of Magdalen College, and the yet more perfect follower of Wykeham in his ecclesiastical character, we purpose presently to speak more at length; and at the same time of one who, though not a "Wykehamist" by education, could lay good claim to the title for the veneration he bore to the great founder, and whose memory deserves to be had in honour, not only because of his noble reproduction of Wykeham's design in

the foundation of Eton and King's College, but because he is the only one of our monarchs who has reigned since the Norman Conquest on whose name there rests any portion of the reputation of sanctity. The reign of Henry VI. was avowedly the most disastrous on record; and his utter incapacity for government, in the midst of those fierce struggles which tore the realm during the period of the civil wars, has made his position in history insignificant, if not contemptible. So at least it is commonly represented; but something of an involuntary veneration attaches to the memory of "Holy Henry;" and there have not been wanting some who, accustomed to study history in the spirit of devout contemplation, have acknowledged among the manifold designs of God, in permitting the awful crisis of the wars of the Roses, the perfecting by suffering of the virtues of "that beneficent, merciful, and saint-like king."

Wykeham's colleges were in his own day regarded with no little curiosity and wonder. Two years after the completion of New College, a great council of state assembled at Oxford; and not one of the nobles and prelates of whom it was formed omitted a visit to the new and splendid foundation of the Bishop of Winchester. Nicholas Wykeham, the warden, entertained them with hospitality worthy of his kinsmanship to the founder, and the rolls of the college bear evidence of the expenses incurred by the visit of "divers lords and their servants" at this time. A little later, John of Gaunt himself, with a stately retinue, visited the college, and was there entertained with "comfits and wine." During Wykeham's lifetime, the college produced several learned and distinguished men, of whose services he made considerable use, and by whom, we are told, he transacted most of his business. He caused several visitations of the society to be held, and once had occasion to address to it a severe censure on the subject of discord and neglect of the statutes. Lollardism appears to have extended something of its baleful influence to the students of New College; in fact, there were few houses in Oxford which were not at one time more or less infected by its doctrines. When Wykeham was reproached with this circumstance by certain jealous courtiers, who charged

him with having raised a seminary of heresy, "God forbid," he replied, with his usual temperance of speech, "that I should expect my little hostel to be happier than the Ark of Noe, which carried a reprobate; or than the House of Abraham, which contained an Ishmael. What am I, that among my hundred scholars there should not be an offender, when a Nicholas was chosen by the Apostles, and in their own company was found a traitor?" It is probable from these words that the number of delinquents was small; and, indeed, when in 1425 a visitation was held of every other college in Oxford, by command of the Primate, "to make search into heretical pravity," New College alone was excepted, which it certainly would not have been had any suspicion then attached to its members.

Wykeham's spirit of active munificence was one not easily exhausted. Scarcely were his colleges completed, when the old man of seventy, young still in vigour of mind and energy of purpose, cast about for some new object on which to spend his wealth and employ his genius. He chose what was in truth to him a labour of love; and possibly, as life drew to a close, he felt a desire to let his last work be the restoration of that sanctuary which had fostered him as a child. The rebuilding of the nave of Winchester Cathedral had been begun by Bishop Edyndon, who lived to see its western front completed. This grand design is attributed to William of Wykeham; but Edyndon's death put an end to all further progress. In 1394, Wykeham having now been Bishop nearly thirty years, found his hands free to continue the works: and on examination the walls and pillars of the old building were found so firm and so little decayed, that he determined to leave them standing, and simply to effect such alterations as his new designs demanded. This was indeed a stupendous undertaking, and the manner in which he carried out his alterations must hand his name down to all posterity as that of a consummate architect. If his taste had been more freely displayed when it produced the chapels of St. Mary's Winton, his ingenuity was certainly more hardly taxed in the work of changing the heavy Anglo-Norman nave to its present noble proportions. This glorious monument of

architectural skill was completed during the episcopate of his successor, a year or two after Wykeham's decease.

Such were the works which occupied Wykeham during his retirement from political life; yet they were far from being all on which his liberality was exercised. He presented no fewer than a hundred sets of vestments, and a hundred and thirteen chalices, to various poor churches, and we are told that "he gave somewhat to every church in his diocese;" the University of Cambridge acknowledges him as a benefactor; and the special benevolence he showed towards the unfortunate members of the alien priories,* when their lands were seized by the king, is noticed by all his biographers. He gathered them together, and placed them first of all in houses in his own diocese, where he supported them at his own expense; but afterwards procured them a house, with ample revenues, in Paris. Three thousand marks were expended by him in releasing poor debtors; and thrice did he out of his own purse pay the whole of his tenants' share of the parliamentary subsidies. He has been represented as showing no great esteem for the religious orders; and yet we find that the mendicant friars were the constant objects of his bounty; all the old officers of the bishopric, too, he supported and pensioned; and, to use the words of his biographers, "he supported the infirm, he relieved the distressed, he fed the hungry, and clothed the naked."

His scientific talents were constantly employed for the public good; he was not a builder only of churches, but of bridges and causeways; and he went to a vast expense in repairing the roads between London and Winchester, which before his time were well-nigh impassable.

Simple as were his private habits, he could assume the splendour of his high rank with ease and dignity. If the roll of his household expenses tells us in one place of the "liquorice for my lord's drink," and shows us his table furnished on a fast-day with nothing but bread and salt-fish, it gives us elsewhere the minutest details of his

* Houses or cells dependent on conventual establishments existing in Normandy or other parts of France, the inmates of which were generally foreigners by birth.

princely hospitality. He entertained King Richard more than once at Winchester; we read on one occasion of fishermen being hired from the sea-coast to fish for fifteen days together in the Bishop's ponds for the supply of the royal table. No fewer than 350 nobles and gentlemen were in the retinue of the court; for whose entertainment a "*wagon-load*" of bread, four pipes of wine, and fifteen cart-loads of firewood, were provided; while for carpeting sixteen bundles of green rushes were cut from Charwell Common, and strewn over the floor of the noble hall of Wolvesey. As Prelate of the Order of the Garter, he attended some of the great festivals of St. George, then held every year at Windsor, and appeared in his robes of office. He travelled, too, in princely style, in his own chariot, with relays of horses on the road: but if any reader is rigid enough to take exception at this entry of "twelve chariot-horses" on the household rolls of a Bishop of the middle ages, let him but turn the page and see the daily items of his "alms and oblations," and the sums distributed to the poor on all his journeys.

To the monks of the cathedral he was a benefactor in more ways than one; not only as the rebuilders of their church,—an act which they acknowledged, by an express and formal deed, was on his part wholly gratuitous, "proceeding from his mere liberality and zeal for God's honour,"—but also as having re-established strict and regular discipline among them, drawing up for that purpose a body of statutes every way worthy of his prudence and moderation.

But the time was coming when the infirmities of age and sickness at length made themselves felt. In 1402, we find him obliged to nominate two of the fellows of New College, Dr. Nicholas Wykeham and Dr. John Elmer, as his coadjutors. The Papal bull enabling him to do this had been obtained nine years previously; but Wykeham never used it till compelled by extreme indisposition. He was now unable to hold his ordinations, or to assist at the ceremony of the consecration of the five bells which the king had presented to his chapel at Oxford. He resided during these last years chiefly at South Waltham, near to

that Priory of Southwyke, where lay buried his father, his mother, and his sister. Of this circumstance he was not unmindful; and in these his declining years we find him repairing that church at his own expense, and specially the roof over the vault where his parents lay, the completion of which devolved upon his executors.

When the unfortunate monarch he had so faithfully served yielded his throne to the representative of a new dynasty, Wykeham did not withhold his allegiance from the new sovereign, though no doubt his submission was a painful sacrifice. So great was the veneration attaching to his name, that Henry of Lancaster, far from regarding the adherent of the fallen king with any degree of coldness, gave him special marks of favour; and when about to celebrate his marriage with the Duchess Joanna of Brittany, he chose that the ceremony should be performed in his presence, and in his cathedral-church of Winchester.

Relieved in a great degree from the burden of his episcopal charge, he employed the last year of his life in tranquilly preparing for the great change that awaited him. His will is dated the 24th of July 1403, and shows that, however enfeebled in body, his mind remained sound and vigorous to the last. It is thus he speaks in this document, the imperishable witness of his humble piety and his goodness of heart: "Forasmuch as all that is of time in time decays, and every living being must fail and sink until he come to the last change, which is death, and I know not how long I shall remain nor on which day my Maker may take me, but wait in patience until my last change come; moved by this thought, I, William of Wykeham, by God's permission, though unworthy, the humble minister of the Church of Winchester, not placing my hope in this life, which is a passing vapour, and knowing that I must of necessity soon pass from this vale of misery, though in what day and hour I know not, and desiring to make my last provision before I go to Him that sent me, to the honour of my Creator and of my Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, for the salvation of my soul, and the remission of all my sins,—do make this my last will and testament. First, I recommend my soul to Almighty God, my Creator

and Saviour, who made me out of nothing; humbly beseeching Him of His clemency and great mercy to deign to receive it into the company of His elect." He then proceeds to direct that his body may be laid in the chantry which he had erected for that purpose in the nave of his cathedral, on the spot formerly occupied by the altar whereon the Pekis-mass had been accustomed to be celebrated. It was this circumstance which had determined his choice of its situation; and the ancient altar and image were retained within the chantry up to the period of the Reformation. He desires that, on the day of his burial, "to every poor person coming to Winchester, and asking alms, for the love of God, and for the health of his soul, there should be given fourpence." Alms were likewise to be distributed in every place through which his body was to pass, and large provision was made for Masses and prayers for the repose of his soul. No fewer than 230 bequests, amounting in all to the sum of 7000*l.*, occupy the remainder of the will; most of them are for charitable purposes, and some, like the 200*l.* to be distributed to the poor prisoners of London, and the bequests to his servants, he himself executed by anticipation before his death.

In this will no mention is made of the Masses and offices to be offered in his chantry, because these were regulated by an agreement between him and the prior and monks of St. Swithin's; who, in consideration of his numerous benefactions to the cathedral, and specially for his munificence in rebuilding so large a portion of it at his own expense, agreed that three Masses should be daily offered for him and for his parents and benefactors in his chantry-chapel; the first of which should always be a Mass of our Lady, and should be celebrated at a very early hour; besides which, the boys attached to the convent were, every night for ever, to sing in the said chapel either the *Salve Regina* or the *Ave Regina*, with a *De profundis*. for the repose of his soul.

It was not long before they were called on to commence the performance of this agreement. Wykeham was sinking rapidly; though, faithful to his charge to the last, he continued within four days of his death to transact

the business of his diocese, and to admit all persons who desired to speak with him to his presence, as he lay in his upper chamber. But all saw that the "venerable father" (as he is ever affectionately termed in the chronicles of his college) was soon to be taken from them, to receive the reward of eighty years spent in unbroken acts of charity towards God and man. These last days of Wykeham were passed in almost uninterrupted prayer: and so, as the last hour drew on, we are told that, "taking leave of the world, and looking away from his nearest and dearest friends and kinsfolk, who were standing around him, he lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and continued with sighs to implore the mercy of his merciful God, and humbly prayed to the Most Holy Trinity,—not as one that was about to die, but as one that was to pass from exile to his home, from death to life, from bondage to glorious freedom,—that he might soon be allowed to depart, and to be with Christ." He expired on the 27th of September 1404, which that year fell on a Saturday, the day consecrated to the honour of Mary, and on which so many of her servants and clients have passed to their eternal crown.

An alabaster tomb was raised over his remains, which were laid before his favourite altar; and there, with the image of his Blessed Patroness looking down upon the place of his rest, the figure of the good and faithful prelate was represented lying as in tranquil slumber. He is in his pontifical robes, with mitre and pastoral staff, his face turned towards heaven, and his hands folded on his breast in prayer. At his head carved angels seem to watch; at his feet are three monks clothed in the habit of St. Benedict; and the images of more than thirty saints formerly occupied those tabernacled niches which were placed around the monument, but which are now empty and defaced. No hand, however, has ventured to injure the figure of Wykeham himself; the features are as perfect as on the first day they were chiselled, and have the tranquil and majestic character which is described as so peculiarly his own. The preservation of this monumental effigy from the fury of the puritanical soldiers under Sir

W. Waller, who in 1642 devastated the rest of the cathedral, literally breaking down the carved work with axes and hammers, is due to the courage and determination of two gentlemen,* who had formerly been students of Winchester, and who both protected the founder's grave, and prevented the sacrilegious rabble from setting foot within the college-gates. But sacrilege had already done its worst in the preceding century, leaving nothing but the broken foundation-stones of the altar and credence-table to witness against those who had made the daily sacrifice to cease. For three hundred years the "perpetual" Masses have been taken away; and the charity which was so urgently and so touchingly solicited by the great founder is denied him even by the scholars of his own foundation, to whom the inscription, which bids them pray for him and for all who showed him kindness, is nothing now but an antiquarian curiosity.

His own works of charity and munificence make up his fittest epitaph, and have earned for his memory a veneration which attaches to few prelates not honoured by the title of sanctity. A traditional sentiment of respect and love is entertained by those even of opposing creeds for the name of William of Wykeham; and many are ready to repeat in the words of honest John Stow, "Neither do I doubt but that he who thus lived is now with God, whom I beseech to raise up many like Bishops in England."

* Colonel Fiennes and Mr. Nicholas Love.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A, p. 7.

BROTHER RICHARD PEKES, or Pekis, was a monk of St. Swithin's Priory, and was ordained priest in 1322 by Peter, Bishop of Corbavia, on behalf of Rigaud de Asserio, Bishop of Winchester, and by his special license, he being then absent from his diocese, and in attendance at the Papal court.

NOTE B, p. 9.

William de Edyndon, the immediate predecessor of William of Wykeham (of whom Dr. Milner speaks, in his *History of Winchester*,* as "a prelate only inferior to Wykeham himself in his virtues and talents," and says that justice has never been done to his memory), was born of honourable parentage at Edington, a village in Wiltshire, in the diocese of Sarum, and therefore probably received his orders at the hands of the Bishop of that diocese. He was certainly known, and held in good repute, by Adam de Orleton, who had been translated to the see of Winchester, December 1st, 1333, as in the beginning of the year 1335 he collated this William de Edyndon, who was at that time in priest's orders, to the mastership of the hospital of St. Cross, and this preferment was held by him up to the time he was made Bishop of Winchester. In the same year we find Bishop Orleton collating him to the valuable rectory of Cheriton, Hants, which he exchanged a few years afterwards for the rectory of Harting, Sussex, and the prebendship of Allcanings, Wilts, a prebendal stall in the conventual church of St. Marie's Abbey, Winchester; a few months later he exchanged the rectory for the prebendship of Timsbury in the abbey of Romsey. He was a man of unquestionable ability and merits, and stood high in the favour of King Edward III., who, in 1344, appointed him Chancellor of his Exchequer, and shortly afterwards Treasurer of England. On the death of Adam de Orleton, who died at his castle of Farnham, July 18th, 1345, the monks of Winchester Cathedral chose John de Devenishe, one of their own community. The king, however, designed the see for William de Edyndon; and in this wish he found himself forestalled by the Holy See, Pope Clement V. having already fixed upon him for this important bishopric, and to this end had, in the lifetime of the late Bishop, reserved the appointment to

* Vol. ii. p. 29.

himself *per viam provisionis*. This occasioned some little delay; but he was afterwards duly elected by the monks, and John de Devenishe was, by way of compromise, appointed Prior of Canterbury. On the vigil of Christmas, William de Edyndon received by a special messenger the private bull upon his provision to the see of Winchester; but it was not until the 13th February 1346 that the customary apostolic bulls reached him; and on the 21st of the same month, in virtue of the said bulls, he received from the king the restitution of the temporalities of the bishopric. He was consecrated on Sunday, May 14th, 1346, by John de Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishops of London and Chichester, in the chapel of the Archbishop's manor at Otford, in Kent.

In 1350, the king appointed him chancellor or prelate of the newly instituted Order of the Garter, an honour which has ever since been held by his successors the Bishops of Winchester. In 1357, he had the Great Seal delivered to him, and became Lord High Chancellor of England. In this difficult post he conducted himself with great discretion.* On the death of Archbishop Islip, he was elected, on the 10th of May 1366, to the metropolitan and primatial see of Canterbury, which he declined on account of his advanced age, and perhaps also through humility.†

He was distinguished for his numerous works of piety and charity, distributing almost all his unappropriated money amongst the poor during his lifetime;‡ for he had seen his diocese sorely visited by two dreadful plagues, and his beloved children dying by thousands. Little can we realise the frightful havoc occasioned by this terrible scourge, carrying off as it did nine-tenths of the people. "So much misery," says Friar Capgrave, who lived a few years later, "was in the land, that the prosperity which was before was never recovered."§ Our own researches enable us to assert, that it was so great a blow to the religious houses, that up to the period of their suppression they had not recovered from its effects. These sad afflictions laid an overwhelming amount of work upon the shoulders of William de Edyndon, and most zealous and unflinching did he show himself in his laborious office. Exact in the discharge of every duty, he made almost superhuman efforts to alleviate the distress of his own diocese, and did all that he could to console the survivors and inspire them with courage and resignation. Under these circumstances it cannot be matter for wonder that his episcopal palaces were suffered to fall

* Chronic. Anonym., Contin. Hist. Winton.

† Harpsfield, Hist. Eccl. s. xiv. c. 19; and Hen. Wharton, Cont. Hist. Wint.

‡ Chron. Anon., Cont. Hist. Wint.

§ Chronicle of England, edit. 1858, p. 213. Capgrave died at his convent at Lynn, of which he was prior, August 12th, 1464, æt. seventy.

into dilapidation, though this was not owing to his continual absence from his diocese, as has been asserted by some writers; for, in fact, he visited every part of it, and that more frequently than any of his predecessors.

We have no means of ascertaining the actual havoc occasioned among the religious houses of his diocese, or the number of clergy who perished; but in the hospital of Sandown, in Surrey, there existed not a single survivor; and of other religious houses in the diocese (which comprises only two counties) there perished no fewer than twenty-eight superiors,—abbots, abbesses, and priors,—and nearly 350 rectors and vicars of the several parish-churches. In the churchyard of St. Bartholomew, London, 50,000 dead are recorded to have been buried within twelve months; between Candlemas and Easter nearly 200 interments took place every day. Three Archbishops of Canterbury in one year put on the pallium only to be covered with the shroud; and at Westminster Abbey the abbot and twenty-six of his brethren were committed to one large grave in the southern cloister. Pope Clement wrote both to the King of England and to William de Edyndon to encourage them amidst all this distress, imploring them to place their confidence in Almighty God, and in the prayers of His saints. And by processions and prayers to endeavour to propitiate His mercy on behalf of both the living and the dead.

Bishop Edyndon was held in such great esteem by the Holy See that the Papal mandates were almost invariably addressed to him. He delivered the pallium to three Archbishops, viz. of Canterbury, York, and Dublin; consecrated one Archbishop and eight Bishops to the vacant sees in England; and ordained nearly 800 priests. He founded a college for secular priests at his native place of Edington, the beautiful church of which exists to this day; but at the request of the Black Prince, who was a great admirer of the order of hermits, called Bon-hommes, he changed it into a convent of that order. He also founded a chantry of three priests in the chapel of Farnham Castle, and was a benefactor to the college of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, which stood just without the gate of his palace of Wolvesey, Winchester, where the anniversary of his own obit was to be for ever kept; and on the vigil of the feast of St. James the Apostle each year, solemn obsequies were to be celebrated for the repose of the souls of his father and mother, with the office *Salus populi*, and alms were to be distributed to the poor. He built the western front of his cathedral, above the gable of which may still be seen his statue in pontificals, placed beneath a canopy, his right hand uplifted in the act of benediction; and actually began the great work of rebuilding its nave, afterwards so ably carried out by his successor. By his will he ordered

whatever property he left behind to be spent upon this work, and presented to the same church many ornaments and jewels. He was likewise a benefactor to the Benedictine Abbey of Abbotsbury, in Dorsetshire.

Having for twenty years faithfully discharged, almost unaided, the onerous duties of his episcopate, distinguished alike for his charity and his piety, he was, at his palace of Waltham, before the break of day, on the morning of the 8th of October 1366, called to receive his eternal reward. He transacted business up to the 6th of October. His body was brought to Winchester, and buried in the nave of his cathedral-church, within a chantry under the rood-loft, between the pillars on the south side. Here may still be seen his exquisitely carved effigy of alabaster, which, injured and neglected as it is, as a work of art is by far the finest effigy in the cathedral. His high forehead, and calm and thoughtful countenance, cannot fail to attract attention. Around the edge of the tomb runs a Latin inscription in Leonine verse, a testimony of his worth, as will be seen by the following translation :

“ William, born at Edyndon, is here interred.

He was a well-beloved prelate ; and Winchester was his see.

You who pass by his tomb, remember him in your prayers.

He was discreet and mild, yet a match for thousands in knowledge and sagacity.

He was a watchful guardian of the English nation ;

A tender father of the poor, and a defender of their rights.

To one thousand add three hundred and fifty, ten, five, and one,—

Then the eighth of October will mark the time when he became a saint.”

NOTE C, p. 22.

The name of this Archdeacon of Canterbury was Peter Rogers, who was raised to the purple by Pope Clement VI. on the 29th May 1348 ; and on the decease of Pope Urban V. he was elected to the papal chair, and assumed the name of Gregory. He had resided for several years in England ; and was not only personally known to, but an intimate friend of, William of Wykeham, to whom he sent with the greatest expedition the first tidings of his election ;—an event recorded by Wykeham in the words of the annexed translation : “ In the year of our Lord 1370, in the month of December, died Pope Urban the Fifth, of happy memory ; after whose decease, on the day of St. Thomas the Apostle (Dec. 21st), was elected Pope Gregory the Eleventh, who, *on the feast of St. Thomas the Martyr, late Archbishop of Canterbury*, then nearest following (viz. Dec. 29th), solemnly received the tiara and the full powers of the high apostolical office in the city of Avignon ; and upon whose creation, his apostolical letters were received at Winchester on the vigil of the Epiphany of our Lord (January 5th), by the

reverend father the Lord William de Wykeham, by the grace of God Bishop of Winchester."

The right of enthroning all the Bishops of the diocese of Winchester belonged to the Archdeacon of Canterbury by ancient custom. The following account of the ceremony of Wykeham's enthronisation is extracted from his Episcopal Register and other documents :

On the ninth day of July, being the sixth Sunday after Pentecost, in the year of our Lord 1368, and the sixth year of the pontificate of his Holiness Pope Urban V., Master William de Askeby, Archdeacon of Northampton, in the church of Lincoln, personally appeared in the cathedral-church of Winchester, clothed in his sacerdotal vestments ; and, proceeding to the great western entrance of the church, he there received in solemn form the reverend father in Christ, the Lord William de Wykeham ; and, accompanied by his attendants, led him a short way up the nave of the church (to the cherished altar of his childhood), where the Bishop knelt down in silent prayer. His devotions finished, he arose ; and was then and there robed in pontifical vestments and other insignia of his rank. His attendants having formed in solemn procession, he was conducted by the said archdeacon along the nave into the choir, to his episcopal seat. In the presence of the notaries and witnesses hereafter mentioned was then publicly read the commission of the venerable master, Raymund Pelgrini, Canon of Anjou, Vicar and Procurator-general in England, of the reverend father in Christ, the Lord Peter, by the title of *Sancta Maria Nova* Cardinal-deacon of the holy Roman Church, and Archdeacon of Canterbury ;* given under his seal at London on the 12th June 1368, and addressed to the venerable and reverend fathers, the Abbot of Hyde, near Winchester ; the Abbot of Chertsey, Surrey ; Master William de Askeby, Archdeacon of Northampton, in the church of Lincoln ; and Master William de Mulsho, Dean of St. Martin's-le-Grand, London ;—giving them, jointly and separately, full power to perform the enthronisation and installation. This being done, Master William de Askeby, Archdeacon of Northampton aforesaid, inducted and enthroned the reverend father the Lord William, by the grace of God Bishop of Winchester, in his church, and there installed him in his episcopal seat,† and placed him in possession of the said church, with all its rights and privileges, reciting in the Latin tongue the accustomed formula : " By the authority of Christ Church,

* He was elected to the papal chair on the decease of Pope Urban V. in 1370, and assumed the name of Gregory, being the eleventh of that name.

† Winchester Cathedral being a conventual church governed by a prior, the Bishop was not entitled to a throne in the church ; therefore, on visiting his cathedral, and in taking part in any grand solemnity, a faldstool was always provided for him ; or, in other words, a temporary throne.

Canterbury, I induct and enthrone thee, the Lord William, the rightly elected, confirmed, and consecrated Bishop of this church, in possession of the same, with all its rights and appurtenances; and may the Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out, from henceforth, now, and for ever!" The Bishop having sat down, the precentor immediately gave out the chant of the *Te Deum laudamus*, which was joyfully and solemnly sung; and this ended, and the prayer *Exaudi, Domine, preces nostras*, &c. recited, the Bishop forthwith prepared himself to celebrate the High Mass; and, being duly vested, and accompanied by the Lord Prior of Winchester and the Abbot of Hyde as deacon and subdeacon, he proceeded to the high altar. Having celebrated his Mass, he addressed a few brief but feeling words,—almost choked with emotion and mingled feelings,—to the immense multitude of people who crowded on all sides; he gave them his blessing, first in front of the high altar, and then again in front of the rood-loft. Here he paused, and, kneeling down, offered up in the presence of all a prayer for the repose of the soul of his predecessor, William de Edyndon, whose body was lying in the earth close by; and there kneeling, requested that the psalm *De profundis* should be chanted; and having recited the prayer *Fidelium Deus omnium conditor*, &c., he proceeded in solemn procession down the nave; and from the gallery over the portico of its western front, surrounded by his attendants,—the mitred abbots and his own mitred prior,—he gave his blessing to the immense concourse of people assembled without the church, and enabled them all to behold the face of him who was their new Bishop as well as Lord High Chancellor of England, anxious indeed to be endeared to the hearts of all his children. He then ordered the publication (*viva voce*, and by affixing of copies of the same on the church-doors) of the customary indulgence of forty days to all who should confess their sins with sincere repentance, receive the Holy Communion, and visit the cathedral-church, and there pray for his welfare, and God's holy guidance and assistance in the faithful discharge of the onerous duties of the episcopate; and that the blessed and glorious Virgin-Mother of God might never cease to watch over him; together with the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and the holy confessors Saints Swithun, Birinus, Ethelwold, and Hedda, patrons of his church, and all the other saints.

Brothers Hugh de Basyngge, prior of the cathedral-church of Winchester, Thomas Pethy, abbot of the monastery of Hyde, and Robert, abbot of the monastery of Chertsey, and the worthy and noble Sirs John de Clynton, Bernard Brocas, and John de Lisle, knights, and a great multitude of other persons, religious and secular, were personally present, and witnessed all these

things, together with John de Corfe and John de Kelleseye, apostolic notaries public, who had been specially called and desired to attest the same.

The Bishop and the company then proceeded to the enthronisation-feast, held in the great hall of the episcopal palace of Wolvesey; whither the Bishop's marshal, as soon as the Bishop had recited the *secret* of the Mass, had conducted the Archdeacon of Northampton's marshal, and delivered to him the table at the upper end of the hall, on the right hand of the Bishop's table, that he might see it duly prepared, and allotted on this occasion solely to the use of the archdeacon and his guests. On the following day, the archdeacon heard the Mass celebrated by the Bishop in his own chapel; and, having taken leave of the Bishop, and received the accustomed fee for his expenses, departed with all his attendants.

NOTE D, p. 84.

A custom is still observed by the scholars of Winchester College which probably dates from the time of its founder. The college, as we have seen, consists of two quadrangles, the south side of the inner one being formed by the college chapel. In crossing this inner quadrangle the scholars always take off their hats, and pass through it bareheaded. Indeed, they are never allowed to appear at all with their heads covered in that quadrangle, or in the cloisters adjoining the chapel. The custom was undoubtedly originally intended as an act of reverence towards the Most Holy Sacrament reserved in the chapel; though it is now very commonly explained as a mark of respect to the founder. It is obvious, however, that there would be no reason for paying such a mark of respect in one part of the building rather than in another; and if ordained by Wykeham himself, we need scarcely say that it must have been intended as a token of reverence to God, and bore no reference to himself, "an ever unworthy minister," as he calls himself.

NOTE E, p. 89.

The following list, imperfect as it is, is presented as containing the names of those who received their education at the two colleges founded by William of Wykeham, and who afterwards suffered for their adherence to the Catholic faith in the reigns of Edward VI., Elizabeth, and James I. It will be found to include the Bishop of Winchester, late Warden of Winchester College, the Wardens of Winchester and New Colleges, and the Head-master of Winchester College, as well as other men of high academical rank.

1. Dr. Andrew Borde, M.D., educated at Winchester Col-

lege, who early in life entered the Carthusian Order, but does not appear ever to have been professed. He ultimately became a member of the College of Physicians, and was appointed physician to Henry VIII. He led a life of great austerity, wearing a hair-shirt, and keeping his shroud and burial-sheet hanging at the foot of his bed. On the accession of Edward VI. he was arrested on account of his religion, and died a prisoner for the Catholic faith in the Fleet Prison, April 1549.

2. Dr. John White, D.D., Bishop of Winchester. He was educated at Winchester College and New College, and successively appointed Fellow of New College, Oxford, Vice-chancellor of Oxford, Rector of Cheriton, Hants, Head-master of Winchester College, Warden of Winchester College, and Bishop of Lincoln. On the death of Bishop Gardiner he was translated to the see of Winchester. He preached the funeral sermon over the remains of Queen Mary, December 14th, 1558; and justly extolled her for her virtues and piety. Having refused to take the oath of supremacy under Queen Elizabeth, he was, on the 2d April 1559, in company with the Bishop of Lincoln, sent for the second time a prisoner to the Tower (having been a prisoner there in the reign of Edward VI. for religion and conscience' sake). In the damp cells of his dungeon he contracted a painful ague, but was permitted to retire, when in a dying state, to his sister's house at South Warnborough, Hants: he died a few weeks afterwards, January 12th, 1560. He is recorded to have been a man of blameless life, profoundly learned, an able controversialist, and the most eloquent and gifted preacher of his day. He lived an austere and mortified life, spending most of his time in prayer and meditation. Even Camden, the celebrated Protestant annalist of Queen Elizabeth's reign, has not hesitated to say, "His fame and actions did well answer his name; and so did all men say, how contrary soever to him in religion." His will, indeed, is a testimony of his fidelity and his faith: "My desire is to be buried in my church of Winchester; so that in the last day I may rise with my fathers and my children; I hold their faith; and to God I commit my flock, whom I left when living, and dying I confirm by my death."

3. Henry Cole, D.D., Warden of New College, Archdeacon of Ely, and Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. He was deprived, and died a prisoner for the Catholic faith, in December 1579, after twenty years' incarceration.

4. John Boxall, D.D., Warden of Winchester College, Fellow of New College, Dean of Winchester Cathedral, and Registrar of the Order of the Garter. Deprived of all his preferments, and committed, first to the custody of Archbishop Parker at Lambeth, and at last sent a prisoner to the Tower by Queen Elizabeth, on the 8th June 1560, where he continued for many

years, and died in London in the year 1587, in poverty and obscurity.

5. Thomas Hyde, M.A., Head-master of Winchester College, Fellow of New College, and Canon of Winchester. He was obliged to leave the country on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, and retired to Douay, where he wrote several theological treatises in defence of the Catholic faith; and he died in that city, May 9th, 1597.

6. James Turbervile, D.D., Bishop of Exeter, Fellow of New College, and a great benefactor to his diocese. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth he was deprived of his see, and committed a prisoner to the Tower, June 18th, 1560.

7. John Body, M.A., Fellow of New College. On being deprived of his fellowship he retired to Douay; but returning to England as a missionary priest was apprehended, and tried at Winchester for denying the queen's supremacy. He was condemned, and executed at Andover, Hants, November 2d, 1583. "Be it known," he said to the multitude who had assembled to see him die, "to all you that are here present, that I suffer death this day because I deny the queen to be the supreme head of the Church of Christ in England."

8. John Munday, B.C.L., Fellow of New College. He was ejected from his fellowship on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, and took refuge on the Continent; but afterwards returning to England as a missionary priest was apprehended, and on the 12th of February 1584 was executed at Tyburn, with four other priests, sufferers for the same cause.

9. Lewis Owen, D.C.L., Fellow of New College. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth he retired to the Continent, and became Regius Professor at Douay, Vicar-General to St. Charles Borromeo, and Chancellor of Milan, and was consecrated Bishop of Cassano in 1588. He died October 14th, 1594, and lies buried in the chapel of the English College at Rome.

10. Alexander Belsier, M.A., Fellow of New College, Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and first President of St. John Baptist's College, Oxford. Ejected for refusing the oath of supremacy and his adherence to the Catholic religion.

11. John Harpesfylde, D.D., Fellow of New College, Arch-deacon of London, and Chaplain to Bishop Bonner. On the accession of Elizabeth he was imprisoned for refusing the oath of supremacy, but was permitted some years afterwards to retire to a friend's house in St. Sepulchre's parish, London, where he died in the year 1578.

12. Robert Reynolds, B.C.L., successively appointed Fellow of New College and Fellow of Winchester College, Master of St. Cross Hospital, near Winchester, and Canon of Chichester

and Lincoln. Deprived of all his preferments on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, he died in exile.

13. Giles Gollop, B.D., Fellow of New College, eldest son of Thomas Gollop, Esq., of a noted family in Dorsetshire, and brother to George Gollop, Esq., of Standbridge, Hants. Ejected from his fellowship for refusing the oath of supremacy, he retired to the Continent, and joined the Society of Jesus. He died at the Jesuits' College at Rome, in the year 1579.

14. Thomas Hardyng, M.A., Fellow of New College, Canon of Winchester, Chaplain to Bishop Gardiner of Winchester, and Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth he retired to Louvain, where he died September 16th, 1572, and was buried in the church of St. Gertrude. He was celebrated as an able controversialist, and a strenuous champion of the Catholic faith.

15. Thomas Dorman, M.A., Winchester College, Fellow of All Souls', Oxford. Ejected for refusing the oath of supremacy, he retired to Louvain, and became a priest. He died at Tournay in 1577.

16. John Harpesfelde, D.C.L., Fellow of New College, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, Chancellor of Winchester, and Archdeacon of Canterbury. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth he denied the royal supremacy, and was committed to the Tower, where he died in 1583, after an imprisonment of three-and-twenty years' duration. He was the author of several works; and his portrait is to be seen in the Bodleian Gallery, Oxford.

17. Nicholas Saunders, D.D., Fellow of New College. Imprisoned by Queen Elizabeth for refusing the oath of supremacy; after his release he retired to Louvain, and was appointed Regius Professor of Theology. He accompanied Cardinal Hosius to the Council of Trent, and was afterwards sent by Cardinal Allen on a special mission to Ireland, where he is said to have died of famine. He was the author of several Catholic works.

18. John Rastall, M.A., Fellow of New College. On the accession of Elizabeth he retired to the Continent, and became a member of the Society of Jesus, and afterwards Rector of their College at Ingoldstadt, where he died in the year 1600. He was the author of several works.

19. John Marshall, B.C.L., Fellow of New College. Being deprived on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, he retired to Louvain, and was afterwards appointed a Canon of St. Peter's in Lisle, where he died.

20. Thomas Neile, B.D., Fellow of New College, an eminent Greek and Hebrew scholar, and Chaplain to Bishop Bonner. He was Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of

Oxford, but refusing the oath of supremacy was ejected from his professorship and other preferments, and passed the remainder of his days in poverty and obscurity in the small village of Cassington, near Oxford.

21. John Fenne, M.A., Fellow of New College, Master of Bury St. Edmund's School. Being deprived on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, he retired first to Italy, and afterwards to Louvain, where he was Chaplain to the English Augustinian Nuns, and died December 27th, 1615. He was the author of *Quorundam Vitæ Martyrum Angliæ*. His brother,

22. James Fenne, B.A. of New College, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, was ejected on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, and retired to Flanders. Returning to England as a missionary priest, he was apprehended at London, and butchered at Tyburn in company with his fellow collegian John Mundy, February 12th, 1584.

23. Robert Poyntz, M.A., Fellow of New College. On the accession of Elizabeth he was ejected from his preferments, and retired to Louvain. He was the author of some treatises on the Holy Eucharist. The date of his death is unknown.

24. Thomas Stapleton, D.D., Fellow of New College, Canon of Chichester. He retired to Douay on the accession of Elizabeth, and was appointed Canon and Master of the College of St. Amoure, in Louvain; Dean of Hillverbeck, in Brabant; and Professor of Theology at Douay, and afterwards at Louvain, where he died in 1598. He was the author of numerous Catholic works, and translated Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* into English.

25. John Fowler, M.A., Fellow of New College. He fled to the Continent on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, where he wrote several works against the Church of England. He died at Krainburg in Germany, 1578.

26. Richard White, D.D., Fellow of New College, Vicar of Goodhurst, Kent. On the accession of Elizabeth he retired to Louvain, and shortly afterwards to Padua. He was subsequently appointed a Canon of St. Peter's, Douay, Count Palatine of the holy Roman Empire, and Regius Professor of Divinity. He was Rector of the College of Douay during upwards of thirty years, and died in the year 1611. He was nephew to Dr. John White, the last Catholic Bishop of Winchester, of whom we have before made mention.

27. William Rainolds, M.A., Fellow of New College. He visited Rome in the year of the Jubilee, 1575, and was there reconciled to the Church. He was afterwards appointed Professor of Theology and Hebrew at Rheims. He died at Antwerp in the year 1594, and lies buried in the choir of the Béguinage. He wrote several controversial works under the as-

sumed name of William Rosse. It was he who, in the year 1566, received Queen Elizabeth at the gates of New College with an oration, for which he was rewarded with a handsome purse well filled with gold.

28. John Pitts, D.D., educated at Winchester College and at New College. He fled to the Continent in company with Dr. Stapleton. He taught Greek and rhetoric in the English College at Rheims, became Canon of Verdun, and confessor to the Princess Antonia, the wife of the Duke of Cleves, and was afterwards promoted to the Deanery of Liverdune, where he died October 16th, 1616. He was nephew to Dr. Nicholas Saunders, spoken of above, and himself also a distinguished author.

29. Henry Garnet, educated at Winchester College. He retired to the Continent, where he joined the Society of Jesus in 1575, and studied under the celebrated Cardinal Bellarmine; he was afterwards appointed Professor of Hebrew and Mathematics in the Italian College at Rome. He returned to England in 1586, and was appointed Provincial of the English Jesuits, and, on the 3d of May 1606, was barbarously executed before the west door of Old St. Paul's Cathedral, London. Most meekly did he suffer. "This day," said he, "is sacred to the finding of the Holy Cross. Under the protection of this Cross, it has pleased the Divine goodness that I should be brought to this place, and to lay down for its sake my life, and all the crosses of this fleeting and inconstant life. This is, indeed, a great blessing;—a blessing for which it is proper that I should return God unlimited thanks."

30. Thomas Pond, born in 1539, and educated at Winchester College. He was eldest son of William Pond, Esq., and Anne his wife, sister of Thomas Wriotesley, Earl of Southampton. He was one of the greatest and most unflinching sufferers for the Catholic faith, so that even his very enemies felt ashamed of their own cruelty. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1578. In a letter, written to the celebrated Father Parsons, dated June 3d, 1609, glowing with zeal and a religious spirit, he says that he had been confined in ten different prisons during the previous thirty years, and, in that space, had suffered 4000*l.* spoil of his substance. On one occasion, when brought before the court, he says, "Laying my hand upon my cloak" (*i.e.* his Jesuit's cassock), "I protested I would not change it for the queen's crown." Notwithstanding these severe hardships, he attained the good old age of seventy-six, dying March 5th, 1615.

31. Edward Atslow, M.D., elected Fellow of New College in 1554. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth he was ejected from his fellowship for refusing the oath of supremacy. He

afterwards suffered an imprisonment of many years' duration for conscience' sake and his known attachment to the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots.

32. Luke Atslow, M.A., Fellow of New College, and brother to the last named. Ejected from his fellowship for the same cause.

33. Robert Fenne, B.C.L., Fellow of New College, another and elder brother of the martyred priest already mentioned; was deprived of his fellowship and other preferments, on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, for refusing the oath of supremacy.

34. Thomas Darell, M.A., Fellow of New College, a younger son of George Darell, of Calehill, county Kent, esquire, by Mary his wife, daughter of George Whithead, Esq. of Tytherly, Hants. Ejected from his fellowship for the same cause.

35. Richard Shelley, B.A., Fellow of New College, a member of the ancient and distinguished Sussex family of that name, suffered the deprivation of his office from the same cause.

36. John Noble, M.A., Fellow of New College;

37. John Busthard, M.A., Fellow of New College;

38. William Knott, B.D., Fellow of New College;

39. John Ingram, M.A., Fellow of New College;

40. John Catagre, M.A., Fellow of New College;—

are also known to have been ejected from their fellowships for refusing the oath of supremacy to Queen Elizabeth, besides seven or eight others whose names have not been recorded. Wood, the celebrated Oxford historian, has only given the names of fifteen out of the twenty-three Fellows of New College whom he states to have been deprived of their fellowships, on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, for refusing to acknowledge her the supreme head of the Church.

41. Thomas Gawen, M.A., Fellow of New College, a deep and accomplished scholar, Prebend of Winchester, Rector of Exton, Hants. Lived in exile during the Commonwealth, but returned to his native country with King Charles II., and recovered his ecclesiastical preferments, and an additional appointment to the rich rectory of Bishopstoke, Hants, which he soon relinquished, with all his other preferments, for the Catholic faith, and was subsequently appointed an officer in the household of Queen Henrietta. He died on the 8th March 1684. He was the author of *A brief Explanation of the Cere- monial of the Mass, Divers Meditations before and after Commu- nion*, and some treatises.

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